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*Baron. McClelland.*

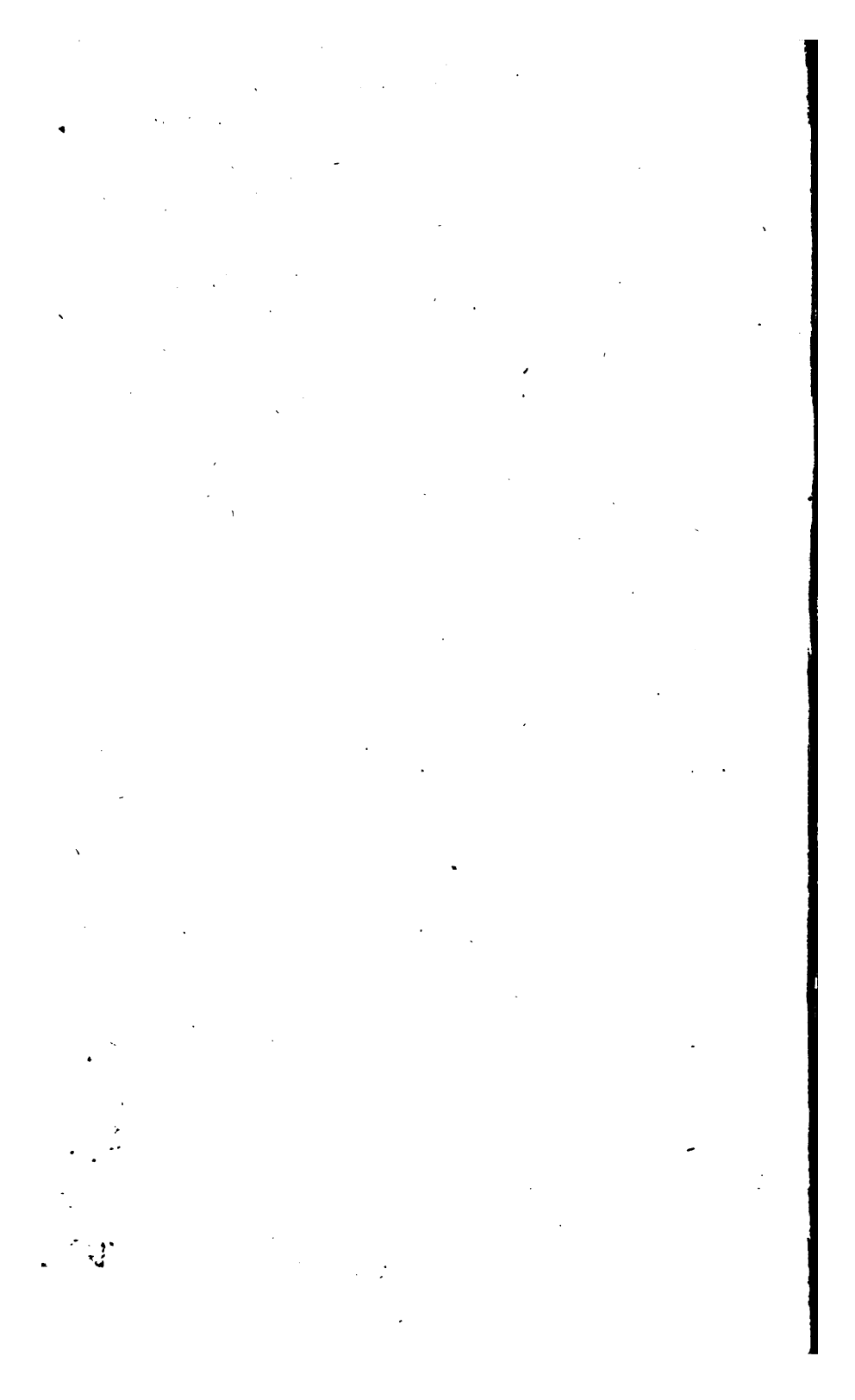
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MEMOIRS  
OF  
THE REIGN OF  
GEORGE III.

TO  
THE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT  
ENDING A.D. 1793.

BY *W. Belsham* BELSHAM.

VOL. II.

THIRD EDITION.

Beneficio quàm metu obligare homines malit; exterâque gentes fide ac  
societate junctas habere, quàm tristi subiectas servitio.

Liv. lib. 26.

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1796.



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OF THE

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## K. GEORGE III.

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THE sixth session of the present parliament began at Westminster on the 25th of November, 1779. The king informed the two houses, in the speech from the throne, “ that he had met them at a time when they were, in concert with him, called upon by every principle of duty, and every consideration of interest, to exert their united efforts in the support and defence of their country, attacked by an unjust and unprovoked war, and contending with one of the most dangerous confederacies that ever was formed against the crown and people of Britain. In the midst of his care and solicitude for the safety of this country, he had not been inattentive to the state of his loyal and faithful kingdom of Ireland; and, in consequence of the addresses presented to him in the preceding session, he had ordered such papers to be laid before them as might assist their deliberations, and he recommended it to them to consider what farther benefits and advantages might be extended to that country. Echoes of the speech in the usual style being proposed, lord Rockingham moved in the house of peers a very spirited amendment, “ beseeching his majesty to reflect upon the extent of territory, power, and opulence—of reputation abroad and concord at

home, which distinguished the opening of his majesty's reign, and marked it as the most splendid and happy period in the history of this nation; and to turn his eyes on the present endangered, impoverished, and distracted state of the empire; and stating to his majesty, that if any thing can prevent the consummation of public ruin, it can be only new counsels and new counsellors, a real change from the conviction of past errors, and not a mere palliation, which must prove fruitless." This was negatived after a very warm debate by eighty-two voices to forty-one. A similar amendment was moved in the house of commons by lord John Cavendish, and occasioned a debate no less violent, in the course of which Mr. Fox particularly distinguished himself by the boldness and energy of his observations. He said, "that the plan of government which had been in this reign invariably pursued, had been very early adopted. It was not the mere rumour of the streets that the king was his own minister, the fatal truth was evident: and though denied by the members of the administration, it was propagated by their followers. It was a doctrine in the highest degree dangerous, as tending to relieve ministers from their responsibility, and to transfer it to a personage who could not by the principles of our constitution be called to an account. But, he said, it should be a warning to sovereigns, that though in general the evils of a reign were, according to the principles of our government, ascribed to the wicked counsels of ministers, yet when these evils reach to a certain height, ministers are forgotten, and the prince alone is punished. Thus it was with the royal house of Stuart. CHARLES and JAMES had no doubt wicked ministers, to whom the errors of their reign were justly in a great degree to be attributed; yet the one lost his life, and the other his crown. The patience of the people was not unlimited, and, however passive for a time, they would at last do themselves justice." The amendment

was

was in the result negatived by two hundred and thirty-three voices to one hundred and thirty-four.

On the 6th of December a resolution of censure on the ministers was moved in the house of commons by the earl of Upper Ossory, relative to the affairs of Ireland. This nobleman possessed large property in that kingdom, and was moreover distinguished by a general candor and liberality of conduct, which gave peculiar weight to his present animadversions. His lordship observed, "that the ministers seemed totally to have abandoned the government of that country to chance. They neither felt for its distresses, nor provided against its resentments: the present state of Ireland, his lordship said, was truly alarming and seemed to portend a sudden dissolution of the constitutional connection which had so long subsisted between the two countries. To the shameful inattention and criminal neglect of the ministry, who might in the early stages of the miseries of that kingdom have granted the Irish nation substantial relief, was the present spirit of resistance wholly imputable. To what had the conduct of ministers led? Either to an unreserved acquiescence in every proposition which Ireland in her present distempered state might think proper to demand, or the horrible alternative of a civil war while engaged in the present unequal contest with France, Spain, and America." This motion was powerfully supported by Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Dunning, a lawyer and speaker of great eminence both in the house and at the bar; and opposed in an elaborate speech by lord North, who declared his intention to bring forward certain resolutions respecting Ireland in a few days. It was negatived by one hundred and seventy-three voices to one hundred. A similar motion of censure in the house of peers by the earl of Shelburne was negatived by eighty-two to thirty-seven voices. In the course of the debate which arose on this occasion, the late lord president Gower asserted his

entire conviction that the censure now moved had a just and adequate foundation. "He had presided," his lordship said, "some years at the council table, where HE HAD SEEN SUCH THINGS PASS, THAT NO MAN OF HONOR OR CONSCIENCE COULD ANY LONGER SIT THERE. The times were such as called upon every man to speak out; sincerity and activity in our councils could alone restore energy and effect to our government." On the day previously fixed lord North brought forward his propositions respecting Ireland, which were substantially the same with those originally moved by lord Nugent, in the session of 1778, but accompanied with several additional concessions, particularly the very important one that Ireland should be allowed the free exportation of her woollens. These resolutions passed unanimously, and were received in Ireland not only with satisfaction but exultation, from the flattering and delusive expectation of deriving from them an effectual and immediate relief to her distresses.

The attention of the public in England was not a little attracted by the estimates of the army and navy, which were about this time laid before parliament. Eighty-five thousand men had been at an early period of the session voted for the sea service, and before the recess the secretary at war moved, "that one hundred and eleven thousand men be voted for the land service, exclusive of militia, amounting with the additional volunteer companies to forty-two thousand. The foreign troops in British pay were calculated at twenty-four thousand, and the artillery at six thousand. The entire aggregate of this formidable force, therefore, fell little short of two hundred and seventy thousand men, without including the troops serving upon the Irish or Indian establishments. To support this vast force twelve millions were raised by way of loan, in addition to the permanent means of supply; and those who most deplored the in-  
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credible and enormous folly which had reduced the nation to a situation so critical and dangerous, could not but view with pleasure and astonishment the power, the riches, and the spirit, now displayed in defence of all that was dear and valuable to a free and independent people. The opposition in parliament had been for some time past gradually acquiring strength; and the nation at large, notwithstanding their original predilection for the war, began at length to be seriously alarmed at the magnitude of the contest, and the prodigious and ruinous expence with which it was attended. The undisguised and unexampled profusion which pervaded every department of government, could not but strike the most careless observer; and, on a sudden, OËCONOMY became the prevailing and popular cry throughout the kingdom.

Early in the new year, 1780, public meetings, were convened in most of the principal counties, and petitions to parliament were framed, with the laudable and express view of establishing a system founded upon principles of strict and disinterested frugality. The county of York, with great propriety and effect, took the lead on this occasion. In their petition to the house of commons they earnestly requested, "that, before any new burdens were laid upon this country, effectual measures might be taken by that house to enquire into and correct the gross abuses in the expenditure of the public money; to reduce all exorbitant emoluments; to rescind and abolish all sinecure places and unmerited pensions; and to appropriate the produce to the necessities of the state in such manner as to the wisdom of parliament should seem meet." This petition was presented to the house on the 8th of February, 1780, by sir George Savile, member for the county, who stated, "that it was signed by above eight thousand freeholders. This petition, he said, had been procured by no underhand arts or public canvass; it was first moved in a meeting of six hundred gentlemen; and there

there was, he believed, more property in the hall where it was agreed to, than was contained within the walls of the house of commons. It was a petition, he said, to which the administration would not DARE to refuse a hearing, however the arts of ministerial artifice and finesse might be employed to defeat the purpose of it." A number of other petitions of similar import being presented, Mr. Burke at length brought forward a specific plan of reform, professedly aiming at two grand objects: "first, the reduction of the national expenditure; second, the diminution of regal influence—that influence which took away all vigor from our arms, wisdom from our councils, and every shadow of authority and credit from the most venerable parts of the constitution."—To effect these purposes, Mr. Burke moved for leave to bring in certain bills for the better regulation of his majesty's civil establishments, for the sale of forest and other crown lands, for more perfectly uniting to the crown the principality of Wales, the counties palatine of Chester and Lancaster, and the duchy of Cornwall. But these bills, after a violent conflict, in the course of which the minister was more than once left in a minority, were finally lost.

A notice given by col. Barré of an intention to move for the appointment of a select committee to inspect the public accounts, seemed, however, to meet with universal approbation. It was for that reason, therefore, artfully and unfairly taken up by the minister himself, who abruptly brought in a bill, contrary to the remonstrances of col. Barré, and the concurring resentment of a large proportion of the house, for instituting a commission of accounts, consisting of persons *not members* of the house of commons. This was deemed unparliamentary, and in strong language opposed as an abdication of the rights and privileges of the house. But it passed into a law by a considerable majority; and the successive reports of the commissioners appointed in virtue of this act, form, by their accuracy,



accuracy, ability, and impartiality, the best reply to the various objections urged against it.

The house of peers in the mean time were far from being indolent or inattentive spectators of the interesting scenes now passing. On the very day that the petition of the county of York was presented to the house of commons, the earl of Shelburne moved in the house of peers, "for the appointment of a committee of members of both houses of parliament, possessing neither employments nor pensions, to examine into the public expenditure, and the mode of accounting for the same." This motion was supported by his lordship in a very able speech, in which he declared "that the great point to which his wishes tended, and to effect which his motion was chiefly framed, was to annihilate that undue influence operating upon both houses of parliament, which, if not eradicated, would prove the destruction of this country." To restore to parliament its constitutional independence, and to place government upon its true foundations, wisdom, justice, and public virtue, was, the noble earl said, his most earnest desire, and this could not be effected without striking at the root of parliamentary corruption. Exclusive of this great and primary object, his lordship shewed, that the most shameful waste of the public money had taken place in every branch of the national expenditure. To support a most ruinous and disgraceful war, a wicked, bloody, and unjust war! the minister had borrowed year after year upon fictitious and unproductive taxes, and anticipated the produce of the sinking fund to answer his own views. Solely intent upon borrowing, he appeared to have lost sight of every idea of decreasing the debt. It was the uncontrouled possession of the public purse which created that corrupt and dangerous influence in parliament, of which such fatal use had been made; which put into the minister's hands the means of deception, which served to fortify him in his mad career,

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and which left no hope or prospect of punishing him for the enormity of his crimes. Influence so employed his lordship declared to be a curse far greater, and more to be deprecated, than pestilence or famine. The present motion, the noble earl observed, was not of a nature novel to parliament; in former times, particularly in the years 1702, 1703, and 1717, there had been commissioners of accounts appointed by act of parliament. The object of the proposition now before the house was of a nature exactly similar, and it went to the abolition of all offices, whatever their salaries or appointments, that answered no other end but that of increasing the undue and unconstitutional influence of the crown." In support of the motion, the duke of Grafton declared, "that from his own knowledge and immediate observation, he could assert with confidence that the spirit of discontent and dissatisfaction was almost universally gone forth, and that the petitions recently presented expressed the genuine sense of the people." On the other hand, lord Chesterfield, a young man not as YET distinguished by the eminence either of his knowledge or talents, and who had lately taken his seat in the house on the decease of his illustrious relation, the famous earl of Chesterfield, affirmed, with singular temerity, that "the majority of the people were well contented under the present government, and that the county petitions and associations were the last struggles of an EXPIRING FACTION." The lords Stormont, Mansfield, and the lord chancellor, maintained with far more plausibility, "that the present motion was a violation of the inherent exclusive privilege of the other house to controul the public expenditure, which no composition, compromise, or compact, would induce them to part with. They insisted that the motion was brought forward to embarrass government, and to throw an odium upon his majesty's confidential advisers; and that the petitions with which the motion was connected were filled with absurd  
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and impracticable notions of public reform, and specious theories calculated to mislead the nation, and to introduce universal confusion." The marquis of Rockingham distinguished himself in the debate by an animated speech in defence of the motion. His lordship said " that a system had been formed at the accession of his present majesty to govern this country under the *forms of law*, but in reality through the immediate influence of the crown. This was the origin of all our national misfortunes; the measures of the present reign wore every internal and external evidence of that dangerous and alarming origin; and, when combined, they presented such a system of corruption, venality, and despotism, as had never perhaps been known under any *form* of free and limited government. This system he had for seventeen years uniformly and vigorously opposed, and particularly during the short time he had presided at the head of the treasury, but to very little purpose. As he had come into office at his majesty's desire, so he had quitted it in obedience to his authority. His lordship implored the ministry not to persist in that blind and hitherto invincible spirit of obstinacy, which had brought the nation into its present calamitous situation, but to pay some attention to the voice of the people, and the interests of their country." On the division the numbers were, NON CONTENTS 301, CONTENTS 55, five-and-thirty of whom entered their protest on the Journals. This was the largest minority that had for many years been known in the house of peers in opposition to the court; and, exclusive of place men, pensioners, and bishops, this expiring faction constituted a clear and decisive majority of the lords present at this interesting discussion.

On the 6th of April the house of commons resolved itself, on the motion of Mr. Dunning, into a grand committee, in order to take the petitions of the people into consideration, and on this occasion a most extraordinary  
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and memorable debate arose. "The first object, Mr. Dunning said, which he meant to submit to the house, was a proposition collected from the several petitions, which, if agreed to, would establish the grounds of their prayer for redress. His second proposition should include the means of that redress. Should the house concur in his propositions, he meant to follow them up with real, substantial, and practicable measures. But, should they dissent from them, or endeavour to evade or procrastinate, there would be at once an end of the petitions and a full answer to the petitioners. His first motion was, that it should be resolved by this house, "that the INFLUENCE of the CROWN had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished." This motion was, by a singular fortune, warmly supported by the speaker of the house, who, though rarely accustomed to take part in their debates, declared, "that, on an occasion like the present, he should deem himself criminal in remaining silent; the resolution proposed contained an allegation which was too notorious to require proof—which in its full extent did not admit of proof. It could be known only to the members of that house, as they were the only persons competent to resolve it; they were bound as jurors by the conviction arising in their own minds, and were obliged to determine accordingly. The powers constitutionally vested in the executive part of the government were, he said, amply sufficient for all the purposes of good government, but its undue influence had increased to a degree absolutely incompatible with every just idea of a limited monarchy. What the petitioners demanded should have originated within those walls; they were sitting as the representatives of the people, solely for their advantage and benefit, and were pledged to them for the faithful discharge of their trust." Notwithstanding the determined opposition of the minister and of the courtiers in general, particularly of the lord advocate of Scotland, Henry Dundas, who

who moved, as an amendment, to prefix the words, " it is now necessary to declare," it appeared on the division, which took place at midnight, on the amended resolution, that the numbers were in favour of the motion two hundred and thirty-three, against it two hundred and fifteen; so that the court was left in a minority of eighteen. Mr. Dunning then moved, " that it was competent to that house to examine into and to correct abuses in the expenditure of the civil list, as well as in every other branch of the public revenue, whenever it shall seem expedient to the house to do so." This was again opposed by lord North, who, in the strongest terms, expressed his wishes that the committee would not proceed. The motion was nevertheless agreed to by the house. Mr. Thomas Pitt then moved, " that it was the duty of that house to provide, as far as might be, an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions presented to the house from the different countries, cities, and towns, in this kingdom." The minister once more earnestly implored the committee to desist, but with no effect; the motion was agreed to. It was lastly moved by Mr. Fox, " that the resolutions should be immediately reported to the house;" which was deprecated and protested against by lord North, as violent, arbitrary, and contrary to the established usage of parliament. The motion, however, was carried, and the chairman reporting the resolutions accordingly, they were severally agreed to by the house.

On the 10th of April, the committee being resumed, Mr. Dunning congratulated the house upon the late decisions, which he however said could avail little unless the house proceeded effectually to remedy the grievances complained of by the people. The alarming and increasing influence of the crown being now admitted by a solemn decision of that house, it was incumbent upon them to go from generals to particulars. With a view therefore of extirpating that corrupt influence, he should move, " that there

there be laid before the house every session, within seven days after the meeting of parliament, an account of all monies paid out of the civil revenue to, or for the use of, or in trust for, any member of parliament since the last recess." This was objected to by lord North, the lord advocate of Scotland, the attorney general Wedderburne, &c. but was carried without a division. Mr. Dunning then moved, "that the persons holding the offices of treasurer of the chamber, treasurer of the household, confederer of the household, comptroller of the household, master of the household, clerks of the green cloth, and their deputies, should be rendered incapable of a seat in that house." This was again opposed, and by the same persons as before; but on a division was carried by a majority of two hundred and fifteen to two hundred and thirteen voices. So far the patriotic part in parliament had triumphantly proceeded, to the infinite joy of the disinterested and independent party of the public, when the sudden illness of the speaker obliged the house to adjourn to the 24th of April; on which day, the committee being refused, Mr. Dunning moved for an address, "that his majesty would be pleased not to dissolve the parliament or prorogue the present session until the objects of the petitions were answered." When the house, after a vehement debate, came to a division on this important question, it was at once discovered that the unfortunate illness of the speaker, "whose health was never better worth than now," had infected "the very life-blood of their enterprise;"—the motion being rejected by a majority of 254 to 203.

During the recess, a sudden and fatal change had taken place in the temper and disposition of the house, and that influence of the crown which the parliament had determined *ought to be diminished*, was, as it now appeared, too firmly established to be in danger of diminution. Mr. Fox rose after the division, and in the most poignant language

guage reprobated the conduct of those men who had thus receded from the solemn engagements they had so recently entered into; and Mr. Dunning scrupled not to charge these members with direct treachery to the nation, considering this resolution as an effectual bar to all future means and efforts of redress. So indeed it proved; for when, on a subsequent resumption of the subject, he moved, "that the two resolutions passed on the 10th of April be reported," a motion was made from the opposite side of the house, "that the chairman leave the chair," which, on a division, was carried by a majority of 177 to 134 voices:—and thus miserably ended those deliberations, which once displayed so fair and flattering a prospect of political reform; and thus contemptuously were the petitions of more than one hundred thousand electors consigned to everlasting oblivion.

It is necessary to recall to our recollection, that an act of parliament had passed in the course of the session of 1778, relieving the Roman Catholics from some of the heavier penalties inflicted upon them in the last century. This act seemed to be well approved in England; but the fanatical spirit, unextinguished since the days of Knox, and which at the present period discovered itself by unequivocal symptoms in Scotland, prevented the extension of this very defective and imperfect toleration to that kingdom. On the bare suspicion of the intended indulgence, great tumults took place at Edinburgh and Glasgow, the popish chapel in the metropolis was destroyed, and the houses of the principal catholics attacked and plundered; on which the lord provost published a singular proclamation, ascribing the riots to the "apprehensions, fears, and distressed minds of well-meaning people, and assuring them that no repeal of the penal statutes would take place." Encouraged by this wretched pusillanimity, the fanatics formed themselves into a society, styled the "protestant association," to oppose any remission of the present persecuting

cuting laws against the papists, and of this association lord George Gordon was chosen president, a man in the highest degree wild, eccentric, and enthusiastical. This association was gradually extended to England, and much pains were taken by inflammatory harangues and pamphlets to prejudice the minds of the vulgar against the late wise and salutary relaxation of the penal code. It was at length determined to prepare a petition for a repeal of the law in question, which is affirmed to have obtained one hundred and twenty thousand signatures, *or marks*, of men of the lowest orders of society, whose excess of zeal could be equalled only by the grossness of their ignorance; —a combination of qualities at once ridiculous and terrible. Lord George Gordon, who was himself a member of the house of commons, declined to present this petition, unless he were accompanied to the house by at least twenty thousand men.

A public meeting of the association was, in consequence, convened in St. George's Fields, June 2, 1780, whence it was supposed that not less than fifty thousand persons proceeded in regular divisions, with lord George Gordon at their head, to the house of commons, where their petition was presented by their president. Towards evening this multitude began to grow very tumultuous, and grossly insulted various members of both houses, compelling them in passing to and from the house to cry, NO POPERY! and to wear blue cockades. During the debate on the petition, lord George Gordon frequently addressed the mob without, in terms calculated to inflame their passions, and expressly stating to them, "that the people of Scotland had no redress till they pulled down the popish chapels." After the adjournment of the house, the mob, on this suggestion, immediately proceeded to the demolition of the chapels of the Sardinian and Bavarian ambassadors. The military being ordered out could not prevent the mischief, but apprehended various of the ringleaders.

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The next day, Saturday, passed quietly; but on Sunday the rioters re-assembled in vast numbers, and destroyed the chapels and private dwellings belonging to the principal catholics in the vicinity of Moorfields.

On Monday they extended their devastations to other parts of the town; and Sir George Savile's house, in Leicester fields, was totally demolished by these blind and barbarous bigots—that distinguished senator and patriot having had the honor to be the first mover of the bill.

On Tuesday, the day appointed for taking the petition into consideration, the mob again surrounded the parliament house, and renewed their outrages and insults. The house, after passing some resolutions adapted to the occasion, and expressive of their just indignation, immediately adjourned. In the evening the populace, now grown more daring than ever, attacked the prison of newgate, where their comrades were confined, with astonishing resolution; and, setting the building in flames, liberated more than three hundred felons and debtors resident within its walls. Encouraged by the impunity with which they had hitherto acted, they now proceeded to Lord Mansfield's house in Bloomsbury Square, which they totally demolished, his lordship escaping not without difficulty. The prisons of Clerkenwell were also forced, many private houses plundered or destroyed, and scarcely did the night afford any cessation of the riots.

On the succeeding day, the mob, rendered more desperate by the mischiefs and villanies they had already perpetrated, attacked with incredible fury the houses of various individuals, chiefly catholics, which they had previously marked for destruction. In the evening the king's bench, the fleet prison, and the new compter, were set on fire, and, with a prodigious number of private dwellings in different parts of the town burning at the same time, formed a tremendous scene of conflagration, to  
which

which London, since the great fire of 1666, had seen nothing parallel or similar.

The same day attempts were made by the rioters on the bank and pay-office; but these, being strongly guarded, happily escaped that destruction which must have involved the whole nation in irreparable distress and ruin. What appeared most to excite the public indignation was the criminal supineness of the magistracy of London \* during these horrible commotions, apparently threatening to lay the metropolis of the empire level with the ground, and which actually presented in many parts the image of a city stormed and sacked.

At length the king himself declared, with laudable resolution, in council, "that, although the magistrates had not done their duty, he would not be deficient in his," and general orders were immediately transmitted to the military to fire upon the rioters, without waiting for directions from the civil magistrate, in consequence of which the slaughter was terrible; but in a short time the commotions were effectually suppressed, and by Thursday noon order and tranquillity were perfectly restored.

On that day lord George Gordon was taken into custody, and, after a strict examination before the privy council, committed close prisoner to the tower on a charge of HIGH TREASON, for which there does not appear to have been sufficient ground, and on his trial he was subsequently acquitted. An impeachment by the house of commons for high crimes and misdemeanors would have been a mode of procedure far more eligible and efficacious, and would indubitably have insured that punishment which his rash and insolent conduct so justly merited.

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\* It must assuredly be not forgotten that Mr. Gillam, an excellent magistrate of the county of Surrey, was tried at the Old Bailey for his life, in consequence of the order given by him at the riots in St. George's Fields, A. D. 1758, for the military to fire, after long and patiently enduring the severest provocations from the rioters, and twice reading the riot act. Such a precedent could not but tend, in similar emergencies, most dangerously to enfeeble the power of the executive government.

A special commission was issued for the trial of the rioters, of whom a very great number, consisting of men very opposite in description and character, were apprehended. Lord Chief Justice De Grey, whose mild and benignant disposition, as well as his infirm health, was ill-suited to this painful task, willingly resigning his office; the attorney general Wedderburne was advanced to the chief justiceship, under the title of lord Loughborough. The multiplicity combined with the precipitate and indiscriminate severity of the sentences, passed in his judicial capacity by this magistrate upon the rioters, far exceeded any thing known in this country since the days of Judge Jefferies: such indeed as left the memory of these transactions impressed upon the public mind in indelible characters of blood.

On the 19th of June. the parliament met pursuant to their adjournment, and the king going in state to the house of peers, made a very judicious speech, "lamenting the necessity which had obliged him, by every tie of duty and affection to his people, to employ the force entrusted to him for the suppression of those acts of felony and treason, which had overborne all civil authority, and threatened the immediate subversion of all legal power, the destruction of all property, and the confusion of every order in the state;—at the same time renewing his assurances, that he had no other object than to make the laws of the realm, and the principles of the constitution, the rule and measure of his conduct."

An address of thanks was deservedly voted in reply to this speech, without a single negative.—The general effect of these recent commotions was very favourable to administration, by inspiring a too well-founded dread of popular interposition in any shape or upon any occasion, however apparently tending to the accomplishment of the most desirable and salutary purposes. After this nothing of material import passed in either house of parliament, and

on the 8th of July, 1780, an end was put to the present session.

The political alienation which had for some years taken place between England and Holland became daily more visible and notorious. A requisition had been made by the court of London to the States General, soon after the declaration of war against Spain, for the succours stipulated by the treaty of 1678, confirmed by various subsequent agreements: but no answer could be obtained from their high mightinesses. On the contrary, loud complaints were made of the conduct of the English court, which had caused to be seized, and carried into the different ports of Great Britain, ships belonging to the subjects of the Republic, navigated under the faith of treaties and not laden with contraband goods:—this, no doubt, was, in many instances, the fact. On the other hand, Great Britain, complained, with equal truth, that France received from Holland continual supplies of naval and military stores, contrary to the faith of treaties; and that the principle of self-defence warranted the seizure and detention of all vessels laden with such exceptionable cargoes.

On the 1st of January, 1780, commodore Fielding fell in with a fleet of Dutch merchant ships off Portland, convoyed by a small squadron of men of war, commanded by count Byland. Captain Fielding desiring permission to visit the merchants ships, in order to ascertain whether they contained any contraband goods, was refused by the Dutch admiral; on which he fired a shot a-head of the count, who returned a broad-side: Commodore Fielding did the same, and then the Dutch immediately struck their colours. Such of the merchant ships as had naval stores on board were stopped, and the Dutch admiral was informed that he was at liberty to hoist his colours and prosecute his voyage. But he refused to quit his convoy, and accompanied the commodore to Portsmouth, A memorial in strong and resentful terms was presented by

by count Welderen, by order of the states, in consequence of this transaction, which was represented as a direct attack upon the independence and sovereignty of their high mightinesses, and a peremptory demand made of reparation and redress, to which no regard was paid. But on the 17th of April a declaration was published by the king of Great Britain, by which it was announced, "that repeated memorials having been presented by his majesty's ambassador to the states general, demanding the succours stipulated by treaty, to which requisition they had given no answer, nor signified any intention of compliance, his majesty considered their high mightinesses as having deserted the alliance that had so long subsisted between Great Britain and the Republic: and his majesty from this time suspended, provisionally, all the stipulations of the several existing treaties, particularly of the marine treaty concluded at London A. D. 1674."

Holland was, however, far from being singular in her complaints respecting the violated rights of neutrality. The powers of the Baltic, with a firmer tone, and in more decided language, declared their resolution to adopt such measures as were necessary for their own security. Early in the spring, 1780, the empress of Russia addressed a declaration to the courts of London, Versailles, and Madrid, containing an explicit statement of the principles on which she had determined to act for the removal of those molestations which had interrupted the navigation of her subjects, and for the protection of the liberty of commerce in general.

The radical principles here laid down were:—I. That neutral ships should enjoy a free navigation even from port to port, and on the coast of the Belligerent powers—II. That all effects belonging to the subjects of the Belligerent powers shall be looked upon as free on board such neutral ships, excepting only warlike stores or ammunition—but neither the vessels, passengers, or the rest of the goods shall be liable to seizure or detention. "To

these principles," her Imperial majesty declared, "she was firmly resolved to adhere; and for the honour of her flag, and the security to her subjects, she had ordered a considerable part of her naval forces to be equipped, to act wherever her honor, interest, or necessity should require."

Denmark and Sweden acceding in form to this declaration of Russia, and ordering similar equipments of their marine, this confederacy of the powers of the north acquired the appellation of "the armed neutrality," and the basis on which it was founded seemed to give universal satisfaction throughout Europe—England alone, against whom it was manifestly levelled, excepted.

In the answer of the king of France it was said, that what her Imperial majesty claimed from the belligerent powers was nothing else than the rules actually prescribed to the French navy, and that solid advantages must result from this measure, not only to the subjects of Russia, but to all nations." The reply of England was cold, and civilly evasive; but this measure in reality excited so deep a resentment, that the conduct of England respecting Russia, for several years succeeding this period, may be ascribed chiefly, or solely, to the alienation and hatred originating in the present obnoxious procedure.

The war between Great Britain and Spain had scarcely commenced when the blockade of Gibraltar was formed by sea and land, and the hope of recovering that fortress probably operated as no inconsiderable inducement with Spain to engage in the present war.

Early in the year 1780 sir George Rodney, an officer distinguished by his gallant exertions in the late war, was appointed to the command of a powerful fleet, destined for the relief of that place, having on board prince William Henry, the third son of his majesty. On the northern coast of Spain he fell in with a convoy of twenty-two merchant-ships, richly laden, under the protection of  
a squadron

a squadron of seven ships of war, to which he immediately gave chase, and in a few hours the whole were taken. This success was, however, only the prelude to another and much greater.

On the 16th of January, off Cape St. Vincent, he descried a Spanish squadron, consisting of fourteen sail of the line, which he directly bore down upon, and notwithstanding the storminess incident to the season, taking the lee-gage, in order to prevent the enemy from retreating into their own ports; at four in the afternoon the action began, and in little more than half an hour one of the Spanish ships blew up with a dreadful explosion. The engagement nevertheless continued with unabating fury in the midst of darkness and confusion, and before morning the *Phoenix* of 80 guns, Don Juan de Langara, the Spanish admiral's own ship; the *Monarca*, the *Princessa*, the *Diligenti*, of 70 guns each, struck their colours; the *St. Julien* and *St. Eugenio* were also captured, but through the violence of the tempest were afterwards driven on shore and lost. The others, escaped in a very shattered condition, and the whole squadron, as to any immediate capability of service, might be considered as annihilated. Though the force of Admiral Rodney was greatly superior, his skill and courage were fully apparent in the mode of conducting the attack, which the violence of the storm, the darkness of the night, and the vicinity of a lee-shore, every where encircled with shoals and breakers, rendered very dangerous; the admiral's own ship, the *Sandwich*, and several others, were in extreme hazard of being lost on the shoals of St. Lucar, and did not get into deep water till the next day.

After effecting the primary object of his commission, the relief of Gibraltar, sir George Rodney proceeded to the West Indies, sending home his prizes under the care of admiral Digby, who, on his passage captured the *Prothée*

*Prothée*, a French ship of 64 guns, and part of her convoy of merchant ships.

No sooner had admiral Rodney taken upon him the command in the West Indies, than every possible exertion was made to bring on a general action, which count de Guichen, who commanded the French fleet, cautiously avoided; but intelligence being received that in the night of the 15th of April, 1780, they had put to sea with their whole force, admiral Rodney, who was stationed at St. Lucie, immediately followed, and early on the morning of the 17th he came in sight of the enemy; at noon the admiral made the signal for a general and close engagement, setting himself a noble example of courage to the fleet by bearing down upon the French admiral, whom he fought with unremitting fury till the enemy bore away, leaving the *Sandwich*, which from causes not easily or clearly ascertainable was very ill supported in this action, a mere wreck upon the water. Other partial and indecisive encounters also took place, in which little inferiority of skill or courage was discernible on the part of the French officers or seamen.

During these transactions in the West Indies Don Galvez, the Spanish governor of Louisiana, reduced the British settlements on the Mississippi, and had made great progress in the conquest of the province of West Florida, though Pensacola held out to the next year.

As a very inadequate counterbalance to these successes, an expedition had been undertaken from Jamaica to the Spanish main; and the fortress of Omoa, which contained a considerable booty in specie and merchandise, was taken by storm, but soon afterwards evacuated. A very heavy misfortune in the autumn of this year took place, in the entire capture of the outward bound East and West India fleets in the bay of Biscay by the Spaniards,—a loss which had no parallel in the naval and commercial history  
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of Great Britain, since the famous capture of the Smyrna fleet in the reign of king WILLIAM.

The war in the northern provinces of America seemed throughout the whole of the summer of 1780 to be almost at a stand. On the 10th of July a large body of French troops commanded by the comte de Rochambeau, under convoy of a considerable fleet, arrived at Rhode-Island. This the comte assured the states was only the vanguard of a much greater force destined by the king, his sovereign, to their aid. A scheme was soon after formed by sir Henry Clinton and admiral Arbuthnot, of a combined attack against the French and Americans at Rhode-Island; and a large portion of the forces stationed at New York were embarked for that purpose: but general Washington, by a rapid movement passing the north river, and advancing to New York compelled them to desist from their purpose.

It affords a grateful relief from the sensations which oppress the mind in listening to the tale of human folly and wretchedness, to revert to an act of the most exalted philanthropy passed about this period by the Legislature of Pennsylvania, to the following purport: "When we contemplate our abhorrence of the condition to which the arms and tyranny of Great Britain were exerted to reduce us—when we look back on the variety of dangers to which we have been exposed, and the deliverances wrought when hope and fortitude have become equal to the contest,—we conceive it to be our duty, and rejoice that it is in our power, to extend a portion of that freedom to others which hath been extended to us,—to add one more step to universal civilization, by removing, as much as possible, the sorrows of those who have lived in undeserved bondage. Weaned by a long course of experience from those narrow prejudices and partialities we had imbibed, we conceive ourselves, at this particular period, called upon, by the blessings we have received, to manifest the sincerity  
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of our profession. In justice, therefore, to persons who having no prospect before them whereon they may rest their sorrows and their hopes, have no reasonable inducement to render that service to society which otherwise they might; and also in grateful commemoration of our own happy deliverance from that state of UNCONDITIONAL SUBMISSION to which we were doomed by the tyranny of Britain: BE IT ENACTED, that no child born hereafter shall be a SLAVE; that negro and mulatto children shall be servants only till twenty-eight years of age; that all slaves shall be registered before the first of November next; that they shall be tried like other inhabitants; and that no negroes or mulattoes, other than infants, shall be bound for longer than seven years."—Such were the sentiments and such the conduct of a people once attached to Britain by every civil and social tie, by which either dignity or advantage could be derived, or durability be hoped—but whom Britain, in the hour of her insolence and infatuation, first attempted to treat as slaves, and then to punish as rebels.

Towards the autumn of the present year, a remarkable event took place in the defection of general Arnold, who commanded a considerable body of troops at West Point on the North River, and who had entered into a secret correspondence with sir Henry Clinton to betray into his hands that important post, and the whole of the troops entrusted to him. The military talents and successes of Arnold had raised his reputation so high, that the danger of placing confidence in a man wholly destitute of honor and probity in private life was not sufficiently adverted to. The intercourse between the American and English generals was carried on through the medium of major André, a young man of singular accomplishments, who had passed up the river unknown and unsuspected from the head quarters at New York to the post of West Point. But on his return by land, September 23d, after  
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eluding the vigilance of the regular patrols, he was apprehended in disguise, and with a false passport, by three American privates, to whom he in vain offered great rewards if they would suffer him to escape. On examination, the papers found upon him, and which he had no opportunity to destroy, discovered all the particulars of the conspiracy. His case being referred to a board of general officers, of which the marquis de la Fayette was one, they unanimously determined that he came under the denomination of a spy; and, that agreeably to the law and usage of nations, he ought to suffer death; which, notwithstanding the urgent solicitations and the impotent and injudicious menaces of sir Henry Clinton, was, on the 2d of October, inflicted upon him in that degrading mode "which gives the brave the keenest wound." Such was the noble candor and magnanimity of his conduct consequent on the discovery, that the high character of the American commander would have derived additional lustre from indulging the earnest and sole request of major André, to be permitted to die as a soldier, not as a felon. General Arnold, with great difficulty, on the apprehension of major André, made his escape to New York, and was immediately promoted to the rank of brigadier general in the king's service.

In the southern provinces the events of the war were of a nature more important and interesting. After the departure of sir Henry Clinton from Carolina, lord Cornwallis was left with a force apparently very inadequate to maintain possession of the province against the increasing armies of the Americans of which general Gates, the conqueror of Burgoyne, had now taken the command. The British forces, having advanced towards the north frontier of the province, found their farther progress intercepted by the enemy, who with far superior numbers were posted near the town of Camden. Lord Cornwallis, sensible that a retreat would be equivalent to an abandonment,

ment of the recent conquests, determined to risk an engagement; and in the night of the 15th of August, 1780, the troops were put in motion, in hope of surprizing general Gates in his camp. That commander with a view likewise to the surprisal of lord Cornwallis, had marched his troops during the night to the attack of the British camp, and the advanced parties of the two armies unexpectedly met in a wood near Camden. A sort of truce was observed till day-light appeared, when the action commenced on the part of the British general, who was well pleased to observe that the American commander had been under the necessity of taking a very disadvantageous and confined position, bounded by swamps on both sides, which prevented his making any efficacious use of his great superiority of numbers. The militia, of whom general Gates's army chiefly consisted, unable to resist the new and formidable attack of the bayonet, fled at the first onset. The continental troops maintained, nevertheless, their ground with great resolution; but finding themselves totally deserted by the militia, who could never be brought to rally, were compelled to retreat, leaving behind them their cannon, camp-equipage, and stores. This victory seems to have been the most complete which was obtained in the whole course of the war. The pursuit continued for more than twenty miles; and colonel Tarleton coming up with a detached corps at the Catabaw fords under general Sumpter, charged them with such vigor that they were instantly broken, and the greater part either cut to pieces or taken prisoners.

General Gates, who thus unfortunately at Camden saw those laurels fade which he had so gloriously acquired at Saratoga, now, with little apparent attention to the point of honor, left the shattered remains of his army to the care of a general Smallwood, and retired into North Carolina to consult with the government of that province,

province upon the means of future resistance and defence.

Lord Cornwallis, eager to improve his victory to the utmost, advanced, as soon as the excessive heats incident to the climate and season would permit, to the vicinity of Salisbury, on the frontier of North Carolina, having first detached major Ferguson to the western side of the province to collect and arm the royalists in that quarter. No sooner was the communication of this officer with lord Cornwallis interrupted by the extension of the distance, than a plan was formed to surround and cut him entirely off. Divers corps of the provincial militia effected a rapid junction with the mountaineers of the western districts, under the command of colonels Williams and Cleveland, to the amount of several thousand men, and, marching in quest of Ferguson, soon discovered his encampment on an eminence known by the name of King's Mountain. The Americans, dividing their force into different columns, ascended the hill in various directions, and attacked the royalists with great fury. Major Ferguson was successful on whichever side he directed his efforts; but no sooner was one division driven back, than the former resumed its station, so that his exertions were entirely unavailing. But his unconquerable spirit disdained all ideas of surrender; and the unequal conflict continued till this officer received a mortal wound; and no chance of escape being left, nor prospect of successful resistance remaining, the second in command sued for quarter, which was granted, and more than eight hundred men laid down their arms, about three hundred being killed or wounded in the action.

This disaster was in its consequences almost as fatal to lord Cornwallis as the affair of Trenton to general Howe. On the first intelligence of it, his lordship retreated to Wynneshorough, where he was much harassed by the irregular but continual attacks of the Provincials; and general  
Gates

Gates was enabled to write to the president of the congress, "The enemy have so far the worst of the campaign, having lost considerably more men, officers, and arms than your army; and even lost ground, as they had several posts at the beginning of the campaign on the Pedee, all of which are now evacuated." But the exultation of the court faction in England, on the intelligence of lord Cornwallis's victory at Camden, was extreme. Untaught by former disappointments, all the flattering and favorite ideas of absolute conquest and unconditional submission seemed for a time to be revived. "I have not the least doubt," said the American secretary of state to lord Cornwallis in his dispatch of November 9th, "from your lordship's vigorous and alert movements, that the whole country south of the Delaware will be restored to the king's obedience in the course of the next campaign." It is even possible that the animation inspired by this success contributed to the adoption of the violent counsels, by which at this period matters were brought to the last extremity with the states general.

On the 3d of September, the Mercury, a congress packet, was taken by the Vestal frigate off the banks of Newfoundland. On board this packet was Mr. Laurens, late president of the congress, charged with a commission to Holland. On being brought to England, he was examined by the privy council, and committed close prisoner to the tower, on an accusation of high treason. His papers, which had been thrown overboard, and by great dexterity and diligence recovered and deciphered, were found to contain the sketch of a treaty of amity and commerce between the republic of Holland and the states of America. This treaty appeared to be in a train of negotiation, and to have received the sanction and approbation of M. Van Berkel, counsellor and pensionary of Amsterdam. Such was the high offence taken by the court of London at this discovery, that immediate orders were transmitted to Sir

Joseph

Joseph York, to represent to the states general, that the states of Amsterdam, as appeared from the papers of the Sieur Laurens, calling himself president of the pretended congress, had entered into a clandestine correspondence with the American rebels, and that instructions and powers had been given by them for the purpose of concluding a treaty of indissoluble friendship with the said rebels. His Britannic majesty, therefore, required not only a formal disavowal of so irregular a conduct, but also insisted on speedy satisfaction adequate to the offence; and the exemplary punishment of the Pensionary Van Berkel and his accomplices, as disturbers of the public peace and violators of the rights of nations; otherwise the king would be obliged to take such steps as became his dignity and the interests of his subjects. The states general, though they passed without difficulty resolutions of disavowal and enquiry, delaying to give a formal and explicit answer to this declaration, a second memorial was presented by sir Joseph York on the 12th of December, in which the ambassador requires an immediate and satisfactory answer from the states. "The king," he says, "has never imagined that your high mightinesses had approved of a treaty with his rebellious subjects. That had been raising the buckler on your part. But the offence has been committed by a city which makes a considerable part of the state, and it belongs to the sovereign power to punish and give satisfaction for it: and it will not be till the last extremity, in case of denial or silence, that the king will take them upon himself." The ambassador was now informed that the memorial would be taken *ad referendum* by the deputies of the respective provinces, according to the received custom and constitution of their government. This being regarded as a palpable evasion, the ambassador received orders immediately to leave the Hague, and a declaration of war was published against Holland on the 20th of December 1780. This was a measure totally unexpected on  
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the part of the states general, who were ill-prepared for such a rupture. Before the departure of count Welderen, he delivered, by order of the states, a letter to lord Stormont, which his lordship returned unopened.

However unjust and indefensible had been the policy of the British government, the hostile conduct of the Dutch, apparently proceeding less from a spirit of generous attachment to the cause of violated freedom, than from a sordid and avaricious selfishness, had rendered them the objects of the national resentment and aversion. The declaration of war, therefore, which carried with it a resemblance of vigor, and even of magnanimity, was received with a great share of approbation and applause. There were not, however, wanting those who, without any prejudice in favor of Holland, hesitated not to affirm that this last act of the British ministry, filled up the measure of their iniquity and absurdity. "Where," said they, "could be the civil or political offence for the subjects of a foreign state to enter into provisional agreements with the Americans, which were not, and could not be supposed valid, till the recognition of American independence had taken place, and which, in the very words of the instrument itself, professed to be merely "outlines of a treaty of commerce, such as *might be concluded hereafter*, between their high mightinesses and the united states of America?"

If to maintain an amicable intercourse of this indefinite nature with the Americans was criminal in the Dutch, Holland could be regarded in no other light than as a province of England. The king of England seemed not to recollect, that the subjects of the states general were not his subjects, or accountable to him for their actions. They farther affirmed, that a provisional treaty, or speculative project, for it was no more, of peace and amity with America, did by no means necessarily imply enmity or ill-will to England:—that this treaty, whether it boded good

or



or ill to England, had been already publicly and unre-  
servedly disavowed by the Dutch government ; and that  
nothing less than a direct and positive injury could, in the  
eye of reason, justify a denunciation of hostility.

As to the insolent requisition of exemplary punishment  
on the person of Van Berkel, who might, for any thing  
that appeared, be actuated by motives the most upright  
and patriotic ; the king of England ought to have reflect-  
ed, that the laws of England, in similar circumstances,  
would not have authorised him to have inflicted the slight-  
est punishment on even the meanest of his subjects, who  
should have formed the plan of a mere contingent agree-  
ment with the revolted provinces of another power, to  
take effect only when their claim of sovereignty should be  
actually recognised, and when the conditions should be  
approved and ratified by the government to which alone  
they owed allegiance.

On the whole, it may safely be affirmed, that a more  
frivolous and invalid plea or pretext of national hostility  
has seldom been urged, even by royal logicians. The folly  
of the measure also was no less obvious than its injustice :  
for, though Holland was attacked thus suddenly and un-  
prepared, there could be no doubt but that she would, in  
a short time, become a potent accession to the strength of  
that formidable confederacy which seemed already to  
threaten the very existence of Britain.

The FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT of Great Britain was  
dissolved by proclamation on the 1st of September, and a  
new parliament convened, which met on the 31st of Oc-  
tober 1780.

On the event of this dissolution, amidst the multiplicity  
of election advertisements usual on such occasions, a very  
remarkable address from sir George Savile, member for  
the county of York, to his constituents, was published,  
well deserving the notice of history, as exhibiting the sen-  
timents, not merely of that eminently distinguished pa-  
triot,

triot, but of all intelligent, reflecting, and disinterested persons, at this alarming period. In renewing the tender of his services, he confesses, that "it has not been without much serious consideration, and more than common hesitation, that he determined upon it. This satisfaction and honor," says this Aristides of Britain, "of attending your business have ever over-balanced the labor. But my attendance during the last parliament has been something worse than laborious—it has been discouraging, grievous, painful. Look back for a moment upon the things which have been done, or being done, have been approved of by that body of which I have been a constituent part. In comparing the present with the past situation of public affairs, one consolation only remains, that of being able to assert that there has been no measure of all those, that have proved so ruinous and fatal, which I have not, as an individual, resisted to the utmost of my power:—a poor, barren, ineffectual negative is indeed all the claim I can plead to your favor; and truth obliges me to add, that I at length return to you with hardly a ray of hope of seeing any change in the miserable course of public calamities.

"On this melancholy day of account, in rendering up to you my trust, I deliver to you your share of a country maimed and weakened—its treasure lavished and mispent, its honors faded, and its conduct the laughing-stock of Europe;—our nation in a manner without allies or friends, except such as we have hired to destroy our fellow subjects, and to ravage a country in which we once claimed an invaluable share.—Forbearing as well the forward promises as the superficial humbleness of phrase in use on these occasions, I make it a solemn duty to lay before you, without disguise or palliation, the present state of your concerns, as they appear to me, and the gloomy prospect which lies before us. Some have been accused of exaggerating the public misfortunes—nay, of having endeavoured to help forward the mischief, that they might afterwards

afterwards raise discontents. I am willing to hope that neither my temper nor my situation in life will be thought naturally to urge me to promote misery, discord, or confusion, or to exult in the subversion of order, or the ruin of property. Trust not, however, to my report: reflect, compare, and judge for yourselves. But under all these disheartening circumstances, I could yet entertain a cheerful hope, and undertake again the commission with alacrity as well as zeal, if I could see any effectual steps taken to remove the *original cause* of the mischief: THEN THERE WOULD BE A HOPE. Till the purity of the constituent body, and thereby that of the representative, be restored, THERE IS NONE. I look upon restoring election and representation in some degree—for I expect no miracles—to their original purity, to be that without which all other efforts will be vain and ridiculous.”

For the accomplishment of this most important purpose, he concludes with expressing his earnest wish, “that whatever is thought of may be pursued with that true spirit of firmness and moderation which belongs to the cause of justice; and above all, that by every means that can be devised, a good understanding and union may be insured amongst respectable men of all ranks and descriptions, who agree in the main principles of liberty, whatever differences may subsist in smaller points, or in matters not calling for immediate discussion.”

At the meeting of the new parliament, Mr. Cornwall was, for reasons which require no comment, chosen speaker of the house of commons in the room of sir Fletcher Norton, on a division of 203 voices to 134. The KING, in his opening speech, declared “his satisfaction in having an opportunity, by the recent election, of receiving the most certain information of the disposition and *wishes of his people*, to which he was ALWAYS inclined to pay the UTMOST ATTENTION! He acknowledged the arduous situation of public affairs; but the late signal successes of his arms in

Georgia and Carolina would, he trusted, have important consequences, in bringing the war to a happy conclusion." An amendment to the address, consisting in the omission of several complimentary paragraphs, was moved in the house of commons by Mr. Thomas Grenville.

The BLESSINGS of his majesty's reign being recognised in the proposed address, in high-flown terms, as inspiring sentiments of reverence and gratitude, Mr. Fox declared, "that in this part of the address he could not concur, as he was yet to learn what those BLESSINGS were. The present reign had been one continued tissue of disgrace, misfortune and calamity. As to the honourable mention made of the late successes in America, and of the gallant officers by whom they had been obtained, he should answer, that he would not concur in applauding his own brother, who was now serving in America, for any success he might obtain. He never had joined, and as long as he lived he never would join, in a vote of thanks to any officer, whose laurels were gathered in the American war; for he regarded that war as the fountain-head of all the mischief and misery under which this country now labored: and he was well convinced that the ministerial prospects of success, however transiently flattering, would be closed in disappointment and delusion." The address, as originally moved, was at length carried by a majority of 69 voices, which when compared with the majorities of former times afforded some faint gleam of hope that better days were gradually, though slowly approaching.

Nothing meriting specific notice passed in either house previous to the recess of parliament; but on the 25th of January 1781, two days only after they had re-assembled, lord North delivered to the house of commons a message from the king, in which his majesty acquainted them, "that, during the recess of parliament, he had been obliged to direct letters of marque and general reprisal to be issued against the states general of the united provinces.

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For the causes and motives of his conduct he referred to his public manifesto, which, with various other papers, he had ordered to be laid before the house." At the close of a long speech, justificatory of the late measures of government, lord North moved, "That an address be presented to his majesty, assuring him that the house would, with a firm and determined resolution, support the just and necessary war against Holland, for the maintenance of the honor of his crown, and the rights and interests of his people." This motion was seconded by lord Lewisham; but it was not carried without a long and animated debate, in which Mr. Thomas Townshend, afterwards created lord Sydney, particularly distinguished himself. He severely censured "the late long adjournment, which was only calculated to free the executive government from the control and inspection of parliament, who had now only to ratify what the rashness of ministers had most unadvisedly done. In this manner had the house been led into the American war, that fatal source of all our calamities. In this manner had the French rescript been announced; and afterwards the Spanish rescript; and at length the declaration of war against Holland, our antient and natural ally. Year after year had the minister acquainted the house with a new enemy, but never had he yet brought them the welcome information of a new friend. Much had been said of the provocations we had received from Holland, and the predominance of a French interest in that country—but had Holland received no provocation from us? The insolence of the British memorial presented to the states in 1777, contributed more than any thing else to the prevalence of the French faction in Holland. It had been stated, as a serious ground of offence, that Holland had not complied with the requisition of troops, which, by treaty, she had engaged to furnish. But it was notorious, that, in the event of this compliance, Holland would have been immediately invaded by France; and, in

conformity with the same treaties, we must then have sent a much greater aid to the assistance of the republic. If the Dutch at the present period had changed their political system respecting this country, it was owing to the criminal conduct of an administration, who had precipitated us into a war, whence all our misfortunes had arisen. In consequence of that war, our American commerce was lost; and could it be a matter of surprise that the Dutch, a people who existed by commerce, should be desirous to secure a share of it? We were abandoned not by the Dutch only, but by all the powers of Europe, who were all equally convinced, that, under the present wretched administration of affairs, whoever became the ally of Great Britain would only share in her disgrace and her misfortunes."

In the house of lords, the duke of Richmond, lord Shelburne, and lord Camden inculcated the same ideas with great animation and ability. "As to what was called *the treaty* between Holland and America," lord Camden said, "it was the mere unauthorised act of Van Berkel, and betrayed neither directly nor indirectly any intention in the states general of an hostile nature. It did not even appear that they knew any thing of this man or his colleagues; and much less that they had determined to ratify this pretended treaty, or project of a treaty, by which no one was bound, and no one could be injured."

His lordship contrasted the conduct of the present ministers to the states general, with that of lord Chatham, who, in the zenith of his victories, had never deviated from the line of respect and moderation. "He was too wise and magnanimous, whatever might be the causes of complaint, to adopt the style and language of that provoking, arrogant, and indecent memorial, to which, more than to any other circumstance whatever, the subsequent conduct of the republic might be attributed. His lordship was of opinion, that the manifesto against Holland ought not to receive the sanction of their lordships, till stronger evidence

evidence were produced of the necessity, justice, and policy of that measure: and, if no better grounds of hostility should be the result of a more particular enquiry, parliament would be bound to order immediate reparation and satisfaction to be given for the injury already sustained by Holland; and an end would be of course put to the farther prosecution of hostilities."

In both houses, nevertheless, the addresses were carried by great majorities; but the dissentient peers recorded their objections in a strong and vigorous protest. Their lordships declare, "that they can never believe a rupture so contrary to the uniform and approved policy of our ablest statesmen can have become necessary, on our part, without gross mismanagement in our councils; and that honest and able ministers might have prevented *this*, amongst other wretched consequences of the unfortunate American war." The states general themselves, in their counter-memorial, affirm, "that the plan or project of a treaty with America, which had excited, to such a degree, the displeasure of the king of England, although it depended altogether on the anterior recognition of American independence, had been, however, without hesitation, disavowed by them. But the punishment insisted upon was not within their power, and they could not assent to it, without striking at the root of the fundamental constitution of the state. That, obliged by what is held most sacred to defend the rights and privileges of their subjects, the republic could not forget itself so far as to submit to the will of his Britannic majesty, by attempting to overturn those rights and privileges, and exceeding the limits prescribed by the fundamental laws of its government. Those laws required the intervention of the judicial department, and those were the means which the states of Holland, to whose peculiar cognizance it belonged, had resolved to use, by requiring on this subject the advice of the court of justice established in their province. Of this the chevalier

lier York had been formally apprized :—but what was the astonishment of their high mightinesses, when the said ambassador, calling the said resolve *illusve*, flatly refused to transmit it to his court ! This obliged their high mightinesses to send it to count Welderen, their minister in London, with orders to lay it before his Britannic majesty, whose ministers had nevertheless returned it unopened to the ambassador.”

The war, thus rashly and haughtily commenced, was conducted in the bitter spirit of animosity and revenge.\* But before the military operations of the year are entered upon, it will be proper to terminate the civil and parliamentary history of the present session.

The famous reform bill of Mr. Burke was revived soon after the recess : but, on the motion for the second reading, it was rejected *in toto*, by a majority of 233 voices to 190 ; though ably and powerfully supported by many of the most eminent members of the house.

Amongst the speeches which attracted most strongly the public attention was that delivered with much grace and energy by Mr. William Pitt, second son of the late earl of Chatham, who in very early youth had been elected a member of the present parliament, and who now exhibited himself to an admiring nation as equally the heir of his talents and virtues. “ One great object,” Mr. Pitt said, “ of all the petitions which had been presented, was a recommendation of œconomy in the public expenditure ; and the design of the present bill was, to carry into

\* It is a remarkable fact, positively affirmed by Rendorp, burgomaster of Amsterdam, in a political publication, called *Memorien dienende tot Opbeleving*, and still uncontradicted, that sir Joseph Yorke, when he left the Hague, went to Antwerp, and instigated the inhabitants of that city to petition the emperor to insist on the free navigation of the Scheldt. And it is notorious, that when this demand was, some years afterwards, actually made by the emperor, England far from taking any alarm, looked on with calm indifference, or rather with pleasure. But when the same thing was, more recently, attempted by France ; the balance of Europe was discovered to be in imminent danger of subversion : and England and Holland, without allowing any time or opportunity for explanation or retraction, were plunged into a most ruinous and destructive war, under the pretext of defending the violated rights of the treaty of Westphalia.



into effect the wishes of the people, by introducing a substantial system of oeconomy. Besides the benefits which would result from the bill in this respect, it had another object still more important, and that was the reduction of the influence of the crown—an influence which was the more to be dreaded, because more secret in its attacks, and more concealed in its operations, than the power of prerogative." Mr. Pitt adverted to the extraordinary objections which had been made to the bill; it proposed to bring no more than 200,000*l.* per ann. into the public coffers, and that sum was insignificant, in comparison of the millions annually expended. "What then is the conclusion we are left to deduce? The calamities of the present crisis are too great to be benefited by oeconomy. Our expences are so enormous, that it is useless to give ourselves any concern about them; we have spent, and are spending so much, that it is foolish to think of saving any thing. Such is the language which the opponents of this bill have virtually employed. It had also been said, that the king's civil list was an irrefusable parliamentary grant, and it had been even compared to a private freehold. The weakness of such arguments was their best refutation. The civil list revenue was granted to his majesty, not for his private use, but for the support of the executive government of the state. His majesty, in fact, was the trustee of the public, subject to parliamentary revision. The parliament made the grant and undoubtedly had a right to resume it when the pressure of the times rendered such resumption necessary. Upon the whole, he considered the present bill as essential to the being and independence of this country, and he would give it his most determined support."

Early in March, the minister, lord North, brought forward the annual statement of the public account. The entire expenditure of the year his lordship calculated at twenty-one millions,—twelve of which it would be necessary

cessary to raise by a public loan : as to the terms of which, his lordship had contracted with the subscribers, to grant 150*l.* capital stock at three per cent. and 25*l.* capital stock at four per cent. for every 100*l.* in money ; thus creating a new capital of eighteen millions three per cent. and three millions four per cent. being nine millions more than the sum actually paid into the exchequer. To defray the interest of this loan, new taxes would be wanting to the amount of 660,000*l.* annually, i. e. 60,000*l.* more than the legal established interest of five per cent. : exclusive of which, as the subscription to the loan bore a premium of ten per cent. the farther sum of 1,200,000*l.* was lost to the nation. The terms of this extraordinary contract were, even by several of the friends of the minister, declared to be extravagantly high ; and it was by Mr. Fox reprobated in the most indignant expressions of severity, as “ the most corrupt in its origin, the most shameful in its progress, and the most injurious in its consequences, that ever came under the contemplation of that house. In order to carry on a wicked, impolitic, and bloody war, the minister would not scruple,” said this formidable speaker, “ to extort the last guinea from the pockets of the people. The noble lord stands convicted of having made, in the character of agent and trustee for the nation, an improvident, scandalous, and profligate bargain, for which he deserves public execration and exemplary punishment.” On a division, the motion of the minister was carried by a majority of 169 to 111 voices.

In the house of lords, it was again vigorously opposed by lord Rockingham, the duke of Portland, and other peers, who, in a joint protest, recorded their names, to adopt the language of their lordships, “ in testimony of their strongest condemnation of the terms of this loan, and of the MOTIVES which they conceive dictated terms so very disadvantageous to the crown and nation.” All the

the influence and all the activity of the ministers of the crown were now indeed obviously necessary to prevent a parliamentary abandonment of the present system. Some weeks afterwards, the subject was again revived in the house of commons, by a motion of sir George Saville, that a select committee be appointed, to enquire into the circumstances of the late loan, to make an estimate of its terms, and report the same to the house. " Though the bargain of the minister had been irrevocably ratified by the house, this distinguished patriot observed, that it was not yet too late, on discovering the shameless prodigality of the terms on which it was concluded, to pass a vote of censure, or even of impeachment, on the man who had sacrificed the public in so gross and daring a manner." This gave rise to a vehement debate, at the conclusion of which the motion was rejected by a majority of 46 only, in a house consisting of near 400 members. And thus were the loud calls of the nation, for an economical reform in the public expenditure, set at contemptuous defiance by the unprincipled effrontery of the ministers.

Towards the end of the session, Mr. Fox moved the house, to resolve itself into a committee, to consider of the American war, for the purpose of devising some means of accommodation. This motion was supported in an animated speech by Mr. Pitt, who expressed his utter abhorrence of a war, " which was conceived," he said, " in injustice, nurtured in folly, and whose footsteps were marked with slaughter and devastation. It exhibited the height of moral depravity and human turpitude. The nation was drained of its best blood and its vital resources, for which nothing was received in return but a series of inefficient victories or disgraceful defeats,—victories obtained over men struggling in the holy cause of liberty,—or defeats which filled the land with mourning for the loss of dear and valuable relatives, slain in a detested and  
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impious quarrel." The motion was rejected by a majority of 73 voices,

A very considerable proportion of the present session was occupied in the consideration of the affairs of India, of which the interval between the civil and military transactions of the present year affords a proper opportunity to take a general review, from the period in which the memorable bill of regulation framed by the minister, lord North, A. D. 1773, passed into a law.

In the month of April 1772, took place, in consequence of the removal of governor Cartier, the memorable appointment of Warren Hastings, esq. as governor-general of India; a man, whose conduct throughout all the inferior gradations of office stood confessedly unimpeached\*. The members of the supreme council appointed under the new act were, sir John Clavering, colonel Monson, and Philip Francis, esq. than whom persons of more inflexible probity and enlightened beneficence could not have been selected by the wisdom of parliament, for the purpose of stemming that tide of corruption and rapacity, which inundated the government of India throughout all its departments and ramifications; and which, when opportunities and temptations arise to a certain height, shall cease to "overleap the mounds of right" when the Ganges shall cease to flow. It is remarkable that these three gentlemen

\* When lord Clive embarked for Europe, February, 1760, he left the government in the hands of Mr. Holwell *pro tempore*; Mr. Vansittart being then actually appointed, and arriving at Calcutta in the month of July. Mr. Vansittart remained in Bengal till the beginning of 1764, and was succeeded by Mr. Spencer, who was quickly superseded by lord Clive. On the second resignation of lord Clive, Mr. Veerlist was advanced to the government of Bengal. To him succeeded Mr. Cartier. Both these gentlemen entered into the views, and acted upon the system established by lord Clive. At length the Sullivan party prevailing in the direction, Mr. Hastings was, in opposition to the influence of his lordship, appointed governor of Bengal: and the more secret transactions, with the concomitant intrigues and cabals, which distinguished his administration, can be perfectly understood only by those who have wasted their time in developing the complex and clashing interests, and never-ceasing contentions and animosities, of the Clive and Sullivan factions.

men were impressed with so high an idea of the merits of Mr. Hastings, upon whose powerful aid and local experience they depended to give efficacy to their exertions in the public service, that sir John Clavering with the approbation of his co-adjutors, had actually addressed the king, previous to their departure from England, to bestow upon the governor some distinguished mark of his royal favor, with a view to induce him to relinquish the intention which he was supposed to entertain of resigning the government.

On the arrival of the new counsellors in India, in the autumn of 1774, their astonishment was great to find the whole system and policy of Mr. Hastings diametrically contrary to their pre-conceived ideas of his character. His manners also were marked by a coldness and *hauteur*, wholly incompatible with the cordiality of friendship; and they had the chagrin to perceive, that they were regarded by him not as associates in the great and necessary work of reform, but in the odious light of detectors, spies, and rivals. The project so universally and justly execrated in England, of setting up the lands of the Zemindars, Polygars, &c. to public auction, appeared, from the immediate and unqualified adoption of this odious system by the new governor, to be the favorite policy of Mr. Hastings himself. In the space of about 200 years, during which the kingdom of Bengal and its appendages had been under the Mahomedan government, the original ground rents or heriots, *aussil jumma*, of the Zemindars, and other great hereditary landholders who held under the government, had never been raised; and a permanent interest being thus created in the land, the Talookdars, Polygars, and Ryots, who possessed the subordinate rights of property under the Zemindars, were neither themselves oppressed, nor allowed to oppress the actual occupants and cultivators of the soil. But from the fatal period that Bengal fell into the hands of the English, the  
security

the security of property was no more\*. After being subject for a succession of years to every depredation and invasion, Mr. Hastings, amongst the first acts of his government, instituted a COMMITTEE of CIRCUIT, invested with the transcendent power to dispose of all the lands in the kingdom, from the highest Zemindar down to the lowest Ryot, by public auction, or farm for the term of five years. The pretext for this enormous outrage was the decay of the public revenue, of which, in consequence of this measure, Mr. Hastings had the courage to promise the court of directors an immediate and progressive augmentation; acknowledging nevertheless, the country at the same time to be in a very languishing state, and that the population had decreased in the proportion of ONE THIRD since the grant of the Dewannee from the Emperor. The most dreadful confusion, as might well be imagined, instantly ensued; and Mr. Hastings, in his minute of April 1773, confesses, "that the expected improvement had not taken place, being obstructed by a circumstance which COULD NOT BE FORESEEN, viz. the farmers having engaged for a higher revenue than their districts could afford. It is true, says he, that the lands were almost all over-bid for; and many let to indigent and desperate adventurers; but this was UNAVOIDABLE IN SUCH A MODE." But this consequence being *confessedly unavoidable*, candor would degenerate into folly, to credit the declaration that it was not *foreseen*. The deficiency

\* In the reign of the emperor Akber, famed for the wisdom and equity of his government throughout Hindostan a general and regular assessment of revenue was formed in Bengal, and the quotas payable by each district of the province, and each village of the district, clearly and specifically ascertained. No deviation from the established rule and mode of assessment, as we are assured, took place from the reign of Akber to the elevation of Jaffer Ali Khan, who, in order to raise the sum which he had stipulated as a reward to the authors of the revolution of 1757, departing wholly from the fundamental constitutions of Akber, multiplied exactions, and introduced that system of oppression, which under the subsequent government of the English produced universal consternation, calamity, and ruin.

ciency in the revenue was in fact enormous, falling, in five years, no less than two millions and a half short of the settlement. But the subsequent conduct of Mr. Hastings furnished the most satisfactory clue to this business. The lands being on all hands admitted to be partially over-rated, the governor and council were of course called upon to exercise a discretionary power of remission. This opened an immense field of fraud and speculation, and could not fail to prove to individuals in certain situations an exhaustless source of wealth. The court of directors declared themselves, in the sequel, "fully aware of the duplicity which had been practised in the letting of the lands in Bengal; that flagrant corruption and great oppressions had been committed;" and they ordered a prosecution to be commenced against the persons who composed the committee of circuit. But after long and studied delays, Mr Hastings ultimately proposed, and carried his proposition in council, "that orders should be given for withdrawing the said prosecution." It is worthy of remark, that the *banyan* or black steward of Mr. Hastings, Cantoo Baboo, rented, under the new tenure, lands to the value of 150,000*l.* per annum; and remissions to a very great amount were granted to this man, as well as to all those whose reasons appeared to the governor and council equally valid. The Zemindary of Baharbund, taken from the Rannee of Radshi, was also given in perpetuity to Cantoo Baboo, at a rent of 82,000 rupees, although the value of it was rated at 350,000. The same Cantoo Baboo was also permitted to contract largely for the provision of the company's investments; "but this," the court of directors, in their general letter of December, 1776, say, "we positively forbid in future." The astonishment into which Sir John Clavering and his colleagues were thrown, on being apprized of this extraordinary state of things in Bengal, was much increased by the alarming information of a war, into which the governor general had recently entered

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ed, in conjunction with the Vizier Sujah ul Dowla, nabob of Oude, for the absolute conquest and EXTIRPATION of the nation of the Rohillas, inhabiting the fertile and beautiful province of Rohilcund, situated to the northward of the dominions of the Vizier, and bounded by the high range of mountains dividing Hindostan from Tartary. It was not pretended by Mr. Hastings, that the company had received any injury whatever from the Rohilla nation; but that we engaged in the war solely as allies of the Nabob Vizier. The causes or pretexts of the quarrel, with respect to the Vizier himself, were of a nature palpably unreasonable and unjust. The Rohilla nation, being involved in hostilities with the Mahrattas, had applied to the Vizier for assistance, who agreed to furnish them with a large body of troops for an equivalent in money. But, through the dilatory, or perhaps insidious, policy of the Vizier, the auxiliary troops did not arrive till the enemy were repulsed. The Rohilla government, therefore, objected, to the payment of the promised stipend; on which the Vizier, with the previous and eager concurrence of Mr. Hastings, determined to declare war against the Rohillas\*, a brave, free, and generous people, for the purpose of adding so desirable a territory to his dominions. The Rohillas, in the highest degree alarmed at this confederacy, offered to submit the whole cause of dispute to the arbitration of the English; but this was peremptorily refused by Mr. Hastings, who urged the Vizier, already wavering in his purpose, in strong terms to the execution of his design, declaring to him, "that it would be absolutely necessary to persevere in it until it should

\* This is the Rohilla statement of the case. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that Sir Robert Barker and the other officers employed in this expedition strongly attest the performance of the service contracted for by the Vizier, in their respective examinations at the bar of the house of commons. But if the object of the Rohilla war had been merely the recovery of a sum of money, whether justly or unjustly claimed, it would, in a moral and political view, have been a trifle light as air and spotless as innocence in comparison of that blackness of darkness in which it is now enveloped.



should be accomplished; and that he could not hazard or answer for the displeasure of the company, if they should find themselves engaged in a fruitless war, or in a ruinous expence for prosecuting it." This apprehension was founded on very reasonable grounds; for the court of directors, in their instructions to the supreme council, had laid it down as an unalterable maxim, "that they were to avoid taking part in the political schemes of any of the country princes, *particularly* of the nabob of Oude, of whose ambitious disposition they were well apprized." A considerable body of troops under colonel Champion, being detached to the aid of the Vizier, entered the province of Rohilcund, and a pitched battle took place, in which Hafiz Rhamel, the principal leader of the Rohillas, and many other of their chieftains were slain. The whole country, described as "a garden not having one spot in it of uncultivated ground," was, in consequence of this victory, converted into a frightful waste, and in a great measure depopulated, either by the rigors of military execution, or by forcing the wretched inhabitants beyond the mountains, to wander and perish in the Tartarian deserts. For this service, the Vizier had agreed to pay into the treasury of Calcutta the sum of forty lacks of rupees; and Mr. Hastings, in vindication of his conduct, alleged, and in his subsequent memorable PARLIAMENTARY DEFENCE entered upon record, the following very extraordinary reasons: "The acquisition of this sum to the company, and of so much specie added to the exhausted currency of our provinces, that it would give wealth to the nabob of Oude, of which we should participate; that he should be always ready to profess, that he did reckon the probable acquisition of wealth among his reasons for taking up arms against his neighbours; that it would ease the company of a considerable part of their military expence, and preserve their troops from inactivity and relaxation of discipline; that the Rohillas are not a *nation*, but a body of foreign adventurers, who  
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had made a conquest of the country about sixty years before; that this province would be a most commodious acquisition, and the weakness of the Rohillas, with the open and defenceless state of the country, promised an easy conquest; and finally, that such was his idea of the company's distress at home, added to his knowledge of their wants abroad, that he should have been glad of *any occasion* to employ their forces which saved so much of their pay and expences." The principal of the Rohilla chieftains, who escaped from the decisive battle of St. George, was Fyzoola Khan who retired to a remote part of the country with his treasures, and the shattered remains of the Rohilla army; and after the death of Hafiz, renowned throughout the East for the superiority of his intellectual talents and personal accomplishments, Fyzoola Khan was very generally acknowledged as the head of this unfortunate and devoted nation. Finding his utter inability to continue the war, he sued in very submissive terms for peace; which the Vizier, through the intercession of colonel Champion, thought proper to grant; and a treaty was accordingly signed at Lall-Dang, October 1774, agreeably to which Fyzoola Khan was confirmed in the possession of Rampore, Shawabad, and some adjoining districts; on condition of giving up half his treasure, and of furnishing a certain stipulated quota of troops when called upon. This indulgence was, however, little to the satisfaction of Mr. Hastings, who had previously declared with respect to Fyzoola Khan, "that he appeared not to merit *any* consideration. The petty sovereign of a country estimated at six or eight lacks ought not *for a moment* to prove an impediment to any of our measures, or to affect the CONSISTENCY of our conduct." The Rohilla war was subsequently condemned in decisive terms by a formal resolution of the court of directors, passed November 1775, "as contrary to the express and repeated orders of the court, and inconsistent with the principles both of policy and

and justice;" and this resolve was, with the singularly complaisant omission of the last word, confirmed by a vote of the court of proprietors. But this extraordinary transaction, ranking among the first and most important acts of Mr. Hastings's administration, and affording a decisive and infallible criterion of its general tenor and spirit, demands a yet farther and more distinct investigation. After the conquest of Bengal, the company at home seemed fully satisfied with the extent of their acquisitions, and the dispatches of the court of directors were from that period filled with rigorous injunctions to avoid all offensive wars, in which they appear with good reason perpetually apprehensive that the ambition, temerity, and avarice of their servants in INDIA would involve them. Nevertheless, at the distance of half the globe from the scene of action, it was impossible not to allow in the execution of their orders some latitude of discretion. "The situation of affairs, say they, in their general letter of the 30th of June 1769, may be varied by unforeseen events at the very moment we are writing;—whenever you think yourselves OBLIGED for our SECURITY upon EMERGENT OCCASIONS to adopt measures of a contrary, i. e. hostile tendency, you are to give us very full reasons for such deviation." In another letter they say, "You must undoubtedly act according to the EMERGENCY of affairs." and again in another dispatch, "As we know not what alliances may be formed to justify us in carrying our arms beyond the bounds of the provinces, we are prevented from proposing any PRECISE PLAN for your guidance in this respect."

These necessary though reluctant concessions on the part of the directors, Mr. Hastings in his MINUTES of DEFENCE preposterously perverts into a justification of the Rohilla war; although the Rohillas were notoriously as unwilling as they were unable to do any injury to the company. The real grounds of the war appeared from the first sufficiently obvious. The pretext held out was, that the vizier, as

an ally of the company, was entitled to our assistance ; and that, as *guarantees* of the treaty between him and the Rohilla chiefs, we were bound to grant it. Without advert-  
ing to the justice or injustice of the vizier's demand on the Rohillas, it is enough to say, that this pretended guarantee consisted only in the treaty being signed at the request of the Rohillas themselves, from their well-grounded distrust of the vizier, in the *presence* of sir Robert Barker, commander in chief of the company's forces, as a witness of the same. It is not pretended that sir Robert Barker had authority to pledge the company as guarantees of the treaty ; and that he should take upon him to bind the government by so serious and important an act, without special instruction and direction, is an incredible supposition ; and in fact, sir Robert Barker, being interrogated at the bar of the house of commons—" Whether he conceived that he had by any act of his bound the company to a guarantee of the treaty by war ?" answered positively, ' I DID NOT.' Also in a letter written even before the actual conclusion of the treaty, he declares, " that it was the farthest from his intention that the company should in any respect whatever be mentioned in the agreement between the vizier and the Rohillas."

From the first suggestion of this project of conquest and extirpation by the vizier, *if indeed the vizier were the original projector*, it is evident that Mr. Hastings urged its prosecution with an ardor far superior to that discovered by the nabob, whose ambition was counteracted by his avarice, and who on cool reflection appears to have thought the prize scarcely worth the purchase. " I availed myself," says Mr. Hastings, " of his eager solicitude for the attainment of this point, to engage his assent to another measure of much greater value to the company—that is to say, the increase of his annual payments or subsidy to the amount of two hundred and ten thousand rupees per month." But it is sufficiently evident, that when this  
concession

concession was once extorted from the vizier, his "eager solicitude" subsided into a state of mind which the artifices of Mr. Hastings only prevented from sinking into coldness and indifference; and when Mr. Hastings affirms, "that this war derived its *propriety* from circumstances of nice relation and various detail\*," he undoubtedly confounds its *propriety* with its *existence*.

In a letter written by Mr. Hastings to the Vizier, April 21, 1773, he enlarges on the great advantage which would result to the vizier from the reduction of the Rohilla country, "because, says he, by that means the defensive line of your dominions would be completed, by including within it all the land lying on that side of the river Ganges."—"The ALLUREMENT (to adopt the language of Mr. Hastings in his defence), thus held out to the vizier, succeeded. He proposed in reply a meeting with me at Bénarès. I found him still equally bent on the design of reducing the Rohillas, which I ENCOURAGED as I had before done, by dwelling on the advantages which he would derive from its success; by objecting with great force the ORDERS of the COMPANY restricting us from such remote schemes of conquest, to which I therefore could not assent without such conditions obtained in return for it as might obviate their displeasure, and win their sanction to so hazardous and UNAUTHORIZED a measure. Having at length obtained this point, viz. *the increase of the subsidy*, I easily yielded my *assent* to the Rohilla plan, i. e. to the plan which the vizier had been thus *allured* and *encouraged* to undertake, on the stipulation of forty lacks for its accomplishment. As a precaution against any effects which were to be apprehended *from the vizier's* IRRESOLUTION, the conditions originally accepted were dictated to him in the form of a letter, to be written by him, in which a clause was inserted, 'that whether the country

was conquered, or a peace concluded between him and the enemy, the stipulation for the forty lacks should become **EQUALLY DUE.** Thus at last, says Mr. Hastings exultingly, an occasion took place, when, by a *slight deviation* from the defensive plan, our alliance with the vizier might be converted into solid advantages. In effect, the same reasons which before urged us to shun every military expedition, now operated in the contrary direction, and recommended the employment of our army for the purpose of **REDUCING OUR EXPENCES, and ADDING to our CURRENCY.**"

Surely the public accusers of Mr. Hastings would not wish to heighten the colors of the picture he has here drawn of himself! As to the mode in which this WAR OF EXTIRPATION, or, to use that more soft and gentle phraseology which gives a specious gloss to deeds of the blackest villany, "this slight deviation from the general plan of defence," was conducted, we are well assured that colonel Champion never mentioned the service on which he was employed without the deepest expressions of grief and abhorrence. "Whilst all ASIA knows, says this commander, that the English gave him, i. e. the nabob vizier, the rod, will they not reasonably conclude that the scourges which the agent gives are connived at?—will they not say every English chief is another Sujah?"—"The authority given to the vizier over the army, says the colonel in a letter to Mr. Hastings, dated May 10, 1774, has totally absorbed that degree of consequence due to my station. My hands have been tied up from giving protection or asylum to the miserable. I have been obliged to give a deaf ear to the lamentable cries of the widow and the fatherless, and shut my eyes against a wanton display of violence and oppression, of inhumanity and cruelty. The company's interest constrained me in public to stifle the workings of my feelings, but I *must* give way to them in private—it would affect your SENSIBILITY too much, were I to descend

scend to particulars. The family of Hafiz, the Begums included, have been driven to the necessity of making supplications for a little rice and water ; and of the prisoners, many have died for want of sustenance. I wish to leave scenes which none but the merciless Sujah can hear without heart-bleeding pain—relieve me therefore as soon as possible.”

In a moving representation to the colonel from the sons of Hafiz, of their manifold distresses, they say of the vizier, “ He has deprived us of our country, of our riches, and even of our HONOR ; and not satisfied with that, he is going to send us prisoners to Fyzabad. We desire no country, no riches, no palaces ; but at Bissoulee are the tombs of our noble ancestors—near them, under some shade, we beg permission to spend the remainder of our days as Faquiers.” These things the colonel says he is compelled to state, although the ungracious reception of his former representations gave him but little encouragement to plead the cause of the unhappy.

In a subsequent letter, dated June 15, 1774, the colonel desires that he may be empowered to withdraw the English troops, in case the vizier will not otherwise be prevailed upon to desist from his enormities ; but this Mr. Hastings, in his reply, declares to be “ obviously inadmissible. Where, said he, is our authority to judge or control the conduct of the Vizier, farther than respects his engagement with us ? Even granting we had an authority to control the vizier’s conduct in the manner you propose, we must have demonstration of the *infallibility* of the person we entrusted with such an authority before we could be vindicated in the delegation of it. All the country subdued becomes absolutely the vizier’s. On the terms you propose, the English commander would supersede his authority in the government of his new possessions.” In lieu therefore of the expedient suggested by the good sense and humanity of colonel Champion, the governor general  
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dered his resident Mr. Middleton, in whom fortunately "no demonstration of infallibility was required," to *remonstrate* and *expostulate* with the vizier concerning his conduct towards the Rohillas, "in order to exculpate the English government from the IMPUTATION, as Mr. Hastings well expresses it, of assenting to such a procedure." But so little did the Vizier regard these feeble and formal remonstrances, that in the sequel the family of Hafiz, after suffering the most dreadful and shocking indignities, were carried in captivity to Fyzabad.

In a subsequent letter from the nabob Mahub Ulla Khan, eldest son of Hafiz, he most earnestly supplicates, in the name of God and Christ, the interposition of the English commander for their release. "O my guardian," says he, "turn your face to the business of a slave, and have us enlarged, and it will not go unrewarded." As to the extravagant plea set up by Mr. Hastings in defence of this most infamous and unprovoked invasion, "that the Rohillas were not a nation, but a body of foreign adventurers, who possessed the country by a prescription of *only* sixty years," it is surely sufficient to reply, that the inhabitants of Rohilcund under their present government enjoyed peace and prosperity—that these people, whom he will not allow to be a nation, were able to bring an army of fifty or sixty thousand men into the field; and that it might with infinitely more force be retorted on the English themselves—that THEY were a body of "foreign adventurers," who had been at this time scarcely seven summers in possession of the country they occupied. With equal feeling and animation it has been said in relation to the general merits of the Rohilla war, "There is no power in this world that can annihilate such a question—THOUGH IT WERE DEAD, YET SHALL IT LIVE. The cause by its own energy shall turn upon the force that oppresses it, and fling to destruction the vulnerable heel that endeavours to keep it down."

Another



Another very important transaction, of which the new counsellors were also for the first time apprized at their arrival in India, left no room for doubt, if doubt could otherwise have subsisted, as to the real character and systematic policy of the governor general. In the solemn treaty of peace concluded August 1765 at Illahabad, between the nabob vizier of Oude and the East India company, it is stipulated that the emperor Sha Allum shall remain under the guarantee of the company in full possession of the provinces of Corah and Illahabad, as a royal demesne; in consideration of which the *derwanee* of Bengal was granted by the emperor in perpetuity to the company.

About the year 1772 the emperor, who had hitherto resided at Illahabad, removed to the ancient capital of Dehli; but engaging soon after this period in unsuccessful hostilities with the Mahrattas, this people compelled him while in their power to grant *funnuks* for the surrender of Corah and Illahabad to them. But Mr. Hastings, in his letter of March 1773 to the court of directors, says, "In no shape can this compulsory cession by the KING release us from the obligation we are under to defend the provinces which we have so particularly guaranteed to him; and they were accordingly occupied by the troops of the company, and taken under its immediate and avowed protection. In a short time however the ideas of Mr. Hastings suffered a total change; for by an act of the governor and council, passed in *June following*, the engagements between the company and the emperor are declared to be DISSOLVED by his alienation from them and their interests, manifested by his removal to Dehli. Nevertheless, "if the KING should make overtures to renew his former connection, his right to reclaim the districts of Corah and Illahabad could not, say they, be disputed; and the governor is authorized to restore them to him, on condition that he should RENOUNCE his claim to the ANNUAL TRIBUTE of twenty-six lacks of rupees, reserved to the emperor  
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out of the revenues of Bengal, and to the arrears which might be due." Yet in the treaty concluded in person by the governor general with the vizier, in *September 1773*, it is asserted, "that his majesty having abandoned the districts of Corah and Illahabad, and given a *sunnud* for Corah and Currah to the Mahrattas, had thereby *forfeited* his right to the said districts." And in his subsequent report of this interview and negotiation with Sujah ul Dowla, the governor declared, "that the administration would have been culpable in the highest degree for retaining possession of Corah and Illahabad for any other purpose than that of making an advantage by the disposal of them, and therefore he had ceded them to the vizier for fifty lacks of rupees—the nett annual revenue of these provinces being estimated at twenty-five lacks." At the same time the governor and council determined to withhold the tribute of twenty-six lacks of rupees from the emperor, pretending "that they were not satisfied of his amicable intentions, and that the reduced state of the treasury rendered such payment impracticable."

Such was the treatment which the emperor of Hindostan received from the servants of a foreign mercantile company, although Mr. Hastings himself, in a minute recorded in the council-book on another occasion, declared, "that fallen as the house of TIMUR is, it is yet the relic of the most illustrious line of the eastern world—that its sovereignty is universally acknowledged, though the substance of it no longer exists—and that the company itself derives its constitutional dominion from its ostensible bounty."

The disinterestedness of Mr. Hastings in all points of pecuniary concern had in England been the theme of high panegyric; but certain facts which came to the knowledge of the new counsellors on or soon after their arrival in India, set this part of his character also in a light which could scarcely be considered as problematical. Of these it will suffice

suffice to touch on two or three of the most conspicuous. By the regulating act of 1773, a salary of 25,000l. per annum was settled on the governor, and he was in the most positive and peremptory manner prohibited from receiving any present or donation in any manner, or on any account whatever. And on his accession to the government, Mr. Hastings in the ostentation of his generosity had declared, "that this prohibition admitted neither of refinement nor misconstruction, and that in his opinion an opposition would be to incur the penalty."

On the 30th of March 1775, a petition was laid before the board, setting forth, "that khan Jehan khan then phoufdar of Houghley, had obtained that office from the governor, with a salary of 72,000 sicca rupees per annum; and that the said phoufdar *had given a receipt of bribe to the patron of the city*, to pay him annually 36,000 rupees out of the salary above mentioned." It being moved, "that the petitioner should be ordered to attend the next day to make good his charge." Mr. Hastings objected to the motion; which being nevertheless carried, the governor declared, "that he would not suffer a judicial enquiry into his conduct at the board of which he was president." and pronounced the meeting of the board dissolved. Other sums from various persons, arising in the aggregate to a vast amount, were acknowledged by Mr. Hastings in his confidential dispatches, doubtless to guard against the effects of similar informations, to be *privately received*; but, as the governor general *alleged*, subsequently converted to the company's use. This however did by no means satisfactorily appear. As an apology for his original intention of concealment, he says, "Having had occasion to disburse from my own cash many sums which, though required to enable me to execute the duties of my station, I have hitherto omitted to enter in my public accounts, and my own fortune being unequal to so heavy a charge, I have resolved to reimburse myself in a mode the most suitable

to the situation of your affairs, by charging the same in my durbar account of the present year, and crediting them in a sum *privately received*." On the first suggestion of suspicion as to the motives of this conduct, he professed to the court of directors, September 1775, " that it was his fixed determination most fully and liberally to explain every circumstance." Being called upon by the court, after a very long interval, for this promised explanation, he declared, " that he had been prevented from the execution of this design by a variety of *more important occupations*; and that the submission which his respect would have enjoined him to pay to the command imposed upon him was LOST to his RECOLLECTION." But by far the most remarkable accusation of this nature against Mr. Hastings, was that preferred by the rajah Nund-comar to the supreme council, in the month of March 1775, of various sums amounting to many hundred thousand rupees, received by the governor general for offices and employments corruptly disposed of by him; and of this the rajah, who was a native Hindoo of the Brahman caste, and of the highest rank, offered to produce incontrovertible evidence. Instead of stating any thing in his defence, Mr. Hastings declared, " that he would not suffer Nund-comar to appear before the board as his accuser," and dissolved the meeting.\*

Soon after this an attempt was made by the governor to indict the rajah, before the supreme court of judicature, for a conspiracy against the government; but the grand jury refusing to find the bill, it was determined to proceed against the rajah in a different mode: and while the charge

\* The legality of the power, thus assumed by the governor general, of dissolving the council at pleasure, being deemed questionable, the court of directors thought proper, for satisfaction on this point, to take the opinion of a man very eminent in his profession, who, although he decided in favour of Mr. Hastings, at the same time remarked, " that he believed him to be the first governor that ever dissolved a council enquiring into his behaviour when he was innocent." And the court of directors, in the result, positively forbade the governor general to dissolve any council in future, against the consent of the majority of the members actually present.

charge against the governor was yet pending before the council, he was indicted, upon the English statute of forgery, for a certain counterfeit bond pretended to have been issued by the rajah many years before; and which, if the charge could be imagined to have any foundation, amounted, by the laws of India, only to a misdemeanor. On this accusation he was brought to trial before sir Elijah Impey, chief justice of the supreme court, and condemned to suffer capital punishment. Being committed to close custody in the common goal at Calcutta amidst a crowd of felons, a petition was presented from the rajah to the supreme council, setting forth, "That after having been honored with the confidence of the nabob Jaffier Ally Khan, and after having discharged the first office in the Subahdary, and being now ten years retired from public life, it might perhaps startle the honorable board to receive an address from him, dated from the common goal at Calcutta, had he not prepared them for some fatal change in his situation, by the representation he had before made of the severe menaces thrown out against him by the governor general. Should my life," said the rajah, "be taken away by the flagitious charge now laid against me by men the most abandoned, the facts before alluded to will remain upon record; the witnesses will be ready, and the proofs producible whenever the governor general has COURAGE sufficient to hear them. My only intention in setting forth the services I have done, and the character I have to an advanced age supported, is to introduce my request, that I may not suffer, from the bare accusation, a punishment equal to that of death, the violation of the most sacred duties of my religion; the institutions of which strictly enjoin a number of ablutions, prayers, and other ceremonies to be performed by the sect of Brahmans before they can take any kind of food:—nothing of this can be performed in the place where I now am. I therefore humbly request that I may be permitted to reside, under as

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strict a guard as may be judged requisite, in some place where these objections may be obviated."

This petition being transmitted to the chief justice, and it being at the same time represented that the rajah had remained for 80 hours without sustenance, permission was obtained to fix a tent on the outside of the prison-gate for the purpose of washing and eating. Mobaric ul Dowlah, Subah of Bengal, being apprised of the deplorable situation of the unfortunate rajah, transmitted a letter to the governor and council, interceding in his favor.

"The affair of Maha Rajah Nund-comar," said the Subah, "is really hard and rigorous. The Maha rajah has transacted affairs of the greatest importance. When Meer Cossim Ally Khan had taken the resolution to ruin and expel the English, the Maha rajah exerted himself to the utmost in supplying them with grain and money. The services of the Maha rajah are well known to the KING of Hindostan. Certainly he never could have committed so contemptible a crime. People employed in important affairs will, undoubtedly, have many enemies; and those who have been active in the affair of Nund-comar have long been his declared foes. Taking therefore into consideration the welfare of the people, I beg, with respect to this affair, that the rajah's execution may be suspended till the pleasure of his majesty the king of England shall be known."

This intercession, however, proved wholly unavailing and useless. In a paper written by Nund-comar, for the inspection of the supreme council, he says, "Now that the hour of death approaches, I shall not, for the sake of this world, be regardless of the next. The forgery of the bond, of which I am accused, never proceeded from me. For the fault of representing a just fact, my enemies, having no other means to conceal their own actions, deeming my destruction of the utmost expediency for themselves, revived an old affair of Mohun Persaud, which had been  
formerly

formerly found to be false; and LORD IMPEY and the other judges have tried me by the English laws, which are contrary to the customs of this country—and, taking the evidence of my enemies, have condemned me to death. In my last moments I request, that you, general, will write my case to the just king of England.—I suffer, but my innocence will certainly be made known to him.”

On the 5th of August 1775, the day fixed for the execution of the rajah, he appeared on the public scaffold without discovering the least symptom of discomposure. He desired the sheriff to present his last respectful salutations to general Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis; and pray for their protection of rajah Gourdas, and that they would please to look on him now as head of the Brahmans. When not engaged in conversation aloud, his lips continued moving as if engaged in prayer, his beads hanging in his hand. The Brahmans who attended him on this melancholy occasion were in agonies of grief and despair; and the surrounding crowd testified their horror and consternation at this event, by clamorous howlings and lamentations. The rajah embraced the attending Brahmans closely, and said he was ready. “My own spirits sunk,” says the sheriff, Mr. Mac-Raby, in his interesting narrative of this extraordinary scene, “and I stepped into my palankeen; but before I was well seated he had given the signal, and the stage was removed. His steadiness, composure, and resolution throughout the whole of the melancholy transaction, were equal to any examples of fortitude I have ever seen or read of. The body was taken down, after HANGING the usual time, and delivered to the Brahmans for burning.”—Thus miserably perished the most distinguished and illustrious of the Hindoo inhabitants of Bengal: and in the subsequent council minute of sir John Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, these gentlemen with good reason say, “After the death of Nund-comar, the governor we believe is well assured, that

that no man who regards his safety will venture to stand forth as his accuser;—and they remark, that in the interim which had elapsed since the alleged offence of the rajah, he had been promoted and employed by the governor general; that his son the rajah Gourdas was appointed to one of the first offices in the nabob's household;—and that the accusation, which ended in his destruction, was not produced till he came forward and brought a specific charge against the governor general, of corruption in his office."

The conduct of the governor general, in relation to Mahomed Reza Khan, a muzzelman of the highest distinction, was scarcely less extraordinary; though to attempt to develop the secret motives which led to it, would open a scene of dark and complex intrigue, totally foreign to the purposes of general history†. This distinguished personage was, through the influence of the English government, on the decease of the late nabob Meer Jaffier Ally Khan, constituted guardian of his children, and administrator or regent of the Subahdary during the minority of his son Nudjah ul Dowla. As to his general character, the late president, lord Clive, in his letter to the supreme council of July 3d, 1765, says, "It is with pleasure I can acquaint you, that the more I see of Mahomed Reza Khan, the stronger is my conviction of his honor and moderation." Also the president and council, in their dispatch to the court of directors, June 1767, say, "Mahomed Reza Khan has pursued the company's interest with steadiness and diligence; his abilities qualify him to perform the most important services." And the court of directors, in their letter of February 1768, say, "We must, in justice to Mahomed Reza Khan, express the high sense we entertain

† The true solution of Mr. Hastings's conduct respecting Mahomed Reza Khan is, that this minister was elevated to the high station he occupied by the interest of lord Clive; and that Mr. Hastings was, on the other hand, intimately connected with the Anti-Clive or Sullivan faction, to whom he owed his advancement.



tain of his abilities, and of the indefatigable attention he has shewn in the execution of the important trust reposed in him." Nevertheless, the cabals of his enemies after a time so far prevailed, that the court of directors transmitted orders to deprive Mahomed Reza Khan of his office, and to institute an enquiry into his conduct. In conformity to his secret instructions, Mr. Hastings caused this minister to be arrested in the city of Moorshedabad, and to be brought down to Calcutta, where he was, by various artifices of delay, kept in prison for two years. At length being brought to trial, he was completely and honorably acquitted of the charges preferred against him: and the court of directors, in their subsequent dispatch, testify their satisfaction in the result of this enquiry; at the same time ordering him to be reinstated in the offices which he had heretofore held. This was accordingly done by general Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, who now constituted the majority of the council:—not, however, without a formal protest from the governor general Hastings; though the court of directors again declared their high approbation of this re-appointment, giving him an assurance of their favor and protection. This was, however, of little avail; for no sooner did Mr. Hastings obtain a majority in the council, by the deaths, first of colonel Monson (Sept. 1776), and in the following year of sir John Clavering, than Mahomed Reza Khan was again removed from his offices, the principal of which was filled by Sudder ul Hock khan, a man wholly devoted to the governor, who wrote to the nabob, that nothing could retrieve the confusion into which the country was thrown, but an unlimited power lodged in the hands of the superintendant: to which the Nabob, now become, to use the words of Mr. Hastings, "a mere pageant without even the shadow of authority," his annual revenue also being arbitrarily reduced from 42 to 16 lacks—expressed in abject terms his entire acquiescence and submission. The court

court of directors, on being informed of these proceedings, in a tone of high displeasure declared, "that NO DOUBT could be entertained of the true design of this extraordinary business," and positively commanded the immediate restoration of Mahomed Reza Khan to the office of Naib Soubadar. After much studied evasion and delay, this order was complied with. But, on the departure of Mr. Francis from India, Mahomed Reza Khan was a third time dismissed from his office, by Mr. Hastings, without any specific charge, trial, or enquiry whatsoever.—On a retrospective view of these transactions, it cannot but excite our astonishment to hear Mr. Hastings affirm, in his minutes of defence, respecting Mahomed Reza Khan, "I am sure his sentiments for me are those of GRATITUDE and AFFECTION." On the last dismissal of Reza Khan, sir John Doyley was placed near the person of the nabob Mobaric ul Dowla, to superintend his expences, with a particular instruction to the nabob, not to admit any English, but such as the said sir John Doyley should approve, to his presence. SUCH was the spirit of Mr. Hastings's internal administration; the most remarkable events relating to his external policy yet remain to be investigated.

The MAHRATTA STATES are the only people of Hindostan who were not subdued by the Moguls, or who never acknowledged allegiance to the house of Timur. Secure amidst their inaccessible mountains, they preserved, unimpaired, their liberty and independency, and were at all times regarded by the most powerful of the Mahomedan emperors as very formidable adversaries. This nation consisted of a number of distinct tribes, governed by their respective chieftains, but who all recognized, as their supreme head, a prince styled the sou or ram rajah, i. e. the great rajah, whose throne was established at Setterah. Since the decline of the Mogul power, that of the Mahrattas had risen rapidly on its ruins.

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At this period their dominions extended from Travancore, near the southern extremity of the peninsula, to the province of Guzzerat, northward, divided from the Persian territories by the river Paddar, the Jumna separating them from the empire of the Mogul. To the east they stretch to the Carnatic and the dominions of the Nizam of the Decan, the province of Catac carrying their possessions irregularly across the peninsula to the bay of Bengal. Their revenues were computed to amount to more than twelve millions sterling; and their military establishment, which was composed chiefly of cavalry, to 300,000 men.

It is a singular circumstance in this government, that the sovereignty of the Sou or Ram Rajah exists at this day only in name. Nana Row, peishwa or prime minister of the country at a period not very remote, seizing the person of the rajah, confined him in a fortress near Setterah; and, usurping the powers of the government, continued to administer them in the name of the sovereign. Nana Row, dying, left the succession to his son Mada Row, who finding a rival in the person of Ragonaut Row, his uncle, a man of an intriguing disposition and most flagitious character, kept him in close confinement till near the time of his own death; when, being anxiously desirous to ensure the quiet succession of the peishwaship to his brother Narrain Row, he became reconciled to Ragonaut, in consequence of the most solemn promises of the latter to assist the young Narrain Row with his most tender care, protection, and advice. The credulous Mada Row shed tears of joy and satisfaction at this happy event, and closed his eyes in peace. But the vile and unnatural wretch, thus generously liberated, immediately engaged in new plots against his nephew Narrain; and in a few months after his accession, September 1773, the young peishwa was assassinated by the villanous contrivance of his uncle, who expected to have succeeded without difficulty to the government.

But the horror and detestation excited by a crime of this enormous magnitude occasioned an opposition so general, that the parricide Ragonaut was compelled to fly his country.

Unhappily he directed his course to the island of Bombay, the government of which not only granted him, without hesitation, their protection; but, affecting to admit the validity of his claims, they commenced open hostilities against the Mahrattas, indulging the most ambitious and sanguine hopes, if the restoration of Ragonaut Row could be accomplished by their aid, to rival Madras and Calcutta in opulence and power.

The island of Salfette, and the city of Baroach, were quickly reduced by the valor of the company's troops; but it does not appear that at this period the presidency of Bombay received any encouragement from Mr. Hastings to prosecute these nefarious projects of aggrandisement. On the contrary, the governor joined with the new counsellors, Clavering, Monson, and Francis, in reprobating these proceedings; declaring by an act of council, passed May 1775, that the measures adopted by the presidency of Bombay had a tendency to a very extensive and indefinite scene of troubles; and that their conduct was unseasonable, impolitic, unjust, and unauthorized." And availing themselves of the superiority vested in them by the late act, colonel Upton was sent on an embassy to the Mahratta court, for the purpose of negotiating a peace, which was concluded at Poonah, and ratified March 1st, 1776, upon terms very honorable and advantageous. By this treaty Salfette, Baroach, and various adjoining districts in the Guzzerat provinces, were ceded to the company, and the sum of twelve lacks of rupees allotted to them as an indemnification for the expences of the war.

On the other hand, it was stipulated that Ragonaut Row should withdraw from Bombay, and that no protection

tection or assistance should be granted to him or any other subject of the Mahratta state, who may cause any disturbance or rebellion in that country. Notwithstanding the solemnity of this engagement, Ragonaut Row still continued at Bombay, and by means of his agents fomented parties and dissensions in the court of Poonah, until the Mahratta government, jealous in the highest degree of the designs of the English, were provoked to receive with marked distinction the chevalier de St. Lubin, agent or ambassador from the French Presidency of Pondicherry.

Mr. Hastings was now completely emancipated from the control of the new commission, by the successive deaths of colonel Monson and general Clavering; and even previous to the decease of the latter, being assured of the invariable support of Mr. Barwell, his own casting vote gave him on all occasions a decided majority.

It is very remarkable, that during the whole course of the contention between the governor general and the new counsellors, the proceedings of the governor were, in almost every dispatch from England, censured and condemned in severe terms, while the conduct of his opponents was as uniformly applauded; yet the governor general was unaccountably continued in office, and suffered ultimately to carry his romantic projects into unrestrained and ruinous execution. In their letter of April 1776, the court of directors highly commend the indefatigable assiduity which, they say, appears in the laborious researches of the *majority* of the council, and their zeal for the interest of the company, and the welfare of the inhabitants, as well natives as Europeans. In a subsequent letter, addressed to Sir John Clavering, in the expectation of his speedy return to Europe, the court express the deep sense they entertain of his singular services, and great concern they felt at the prospect of losing so invaluable a servant. And in their general letter of May 7, 1778, they

lament the death of Sir John Clavering in warm and affectionate terms, as a great and public loss to the East India company and to his country. So indeed it proved: for the governor general, no longer restrained by the presence of this inflexible CENSOR, fixing his eyes on the western side of the continent, perceived an immense field in which his ambitious and restless disposition might find a boundless scope of activity and exertion\*.

On

\* Soon after the death of Sir John Clavering, Mr. Francis transmitted to the minister, lord North, a letter or memorial, dated September 1777, excellently written, and stating in the clearest manner the nature and pernicious effects of the policy pursued by the English government in Bengal, and the measures necessary to establish permanent peace and prosperity in India. In discussing the interesting question—"To what extent, and in what form, the actual sovereignty of Great Britain over those provinces shall be avowed?" he observes, "that the principal branches of the sovereign power are exercised by the East India company, partly under the authority of the subahdar, partly under that of the king of Great Britain. At the same time, the natives in general acknowledge no king but the Mogul, in whose name the revenues are collected, and the current money of Bengal coined. Hence arise all the evils which flow from a divided dominion. The safest, the most simple, and the least invidious principle on which this territory could be held, Mr. Francis pronounces to be that of a fixed tribute from the native prince of the country, avoiding all interference with the internal government. Circumstances, says this sagacious counsellor, inseparable perhaps from the constitution of the East India company, disqualified them in every sense for the duty and office which the acquisition of a territory in India imposed upon them. A body of merchants had interests to provide for, besides those which belonged to them in their assumed character of sovereign. Profit, being the only object of a trading company, became the sole object of government when the two characters were united. Commercial principles of the worst quality, as derived from the constitution of an exclusive company, were all the principles which the India company brought with them into the government of a great kingdom, and IT HAS BEEN GOVERNED ACCORDINGLY.

"After raising the revenues as nearly as possible to the level of the rents, for the support of their GOVERNMENT, they monopolized the produce and labour of the country for the support of their TRADE. To obtain the highest possible revenue from the land, they were obliged to avow, or countenance, a principle subversive of all national prosperity, and not less false in fact than absurd in theory and dangerous in practice—that the ruling power was proprietor of the soil.' On this principle they universally dispossessed the hereditary and lawful owners, and farmed the country to strangers. In a few instances, where the proprietors were employed, it was not in their true character, but as farmers of government. *There is NO EXAMPLE, I believe, of such an ACT OF POWER in the HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.* 'Of all despotic governments,' M. Montesquieu tells us, 'there is none more oppressive than that where the prince declares himself proprietor of the soil, and heir of all his subjects. It always follows that the cultivation of the earth is abandoned; but if, besides this, the prince is a merchant, every species of industry is ruined.'

"Your

On the 28th of January, 1778, the governor introduced the subject at the supreme board in a very long minute, unfolding in a sufficiently unequivocal manner his

"Your lordship will soon perceive how much it is the general object of this representation to establish an opinion, that to make the possession of Bengal beneficial and permanent, we should revert to the ancient institutions of the country, as far as we are acquainted with them, and present circumstances will permit. If it were not for the experience of some years past, it might be superfluous to say, that we provide for our interests when we consult the happiness and prosperity of the people who labour for us.

"It appears to have been the company's original policy, or that of lord Clive, to govern these provinces through the medium of the subahdar, and the best they could adopt, supposing them to interpose in any shape in the internal government. This system was soon violated in fact, and not long afterwards avowedly renounced. The predominant power of the council at Calcutta necessarily reduced the Subahdar to a cipher, and left him and his subjects, as it always will do, a prey to individuals. Forms and appearances were, however, in some degree preserved till the death of Syef ul Dowla, in 1770. From that period we see nothing in the administration of public affairs but enormous abuses on one side, and an absolute want of power or perseverance to correct them on the other. The subahdar's authority, since the company's acceptance of the Dewannee, has been gradually reduced under three successive nabobs, and is now merely titular in the person of Mobarck ul Dowla. The administration of criminal justice is, however, still exercised in his name by the naib subah Mahomed Reza Khan, and we sometimes avail ourselves of the pretence of his authority in our differences with the foreign factories.

"The company hold the Dewannee by grant of the mogul, Sha Allum. The treaty concluded by lord Clive, August 1765, not only acknowledges him as king of Bengal, but secures to him the full possession of Korah and Allahabad, as a royal demesne for the support of his dignity and expences; and by a particular agreement between him and the company, of the same date, they engage themselves to be security for the payment of twenty-six lacks a year, out of the territorial revenue, *in consideration* of his majesty's having been graciously pleased to grant them the Dewannee of Bengal. Your lordship knows how little these treaties have been regarded. His tribute was stopped, and his country, though avowedly entrusted to our good faith, and accepted as a deposit, sold to Sujah ul Dowla.

"The British power is now unquestionably the first in India, at least for defence. To make it respectable in itself, and beneficial to mankind, it must be guided by solid, judicious principles of policy, and they must be steadily pursued. Enough has been done to establish the reputation of our arms. If we mean to keep what we have acquired, *same* care must be taken to establish an opinion of our steadiness and justice.

"With respect to the amount and collection of the revenues, the principal questions are—1st, Whether the lands shall be restored to the hereditary owners? 2dly, Whether the revenues payable to government shall be fixed immutably at a certain sum? and 3dly, By what rule or standard that sum shall be ascertained? To the two first questions I have invariably given an affirmative answer, founded on reasons which I deem incontrovertible. The third must be determined by the capacity of the country, estimated from an average of the actual collections, and combined with the indispensable demands of government. The *farming system* was adopted as the act of a proprietor, with a professed view of discovering the ultimate value of the

his vast and daring projects.—“ If REPORT could be believed,” Mr. Hastings said, “ written engagements had passed between the Mahratta court and M. St. Lubin, the object of which, whatever it be, must, if attempted, prove destructive to the British trade and influence in India. Although the Mahratta power, unallied with other states, was unable to cope with the company, yet, sustained by the French, they are qualified to refuse acquiescence with our demands, which demands the island of Basseen offers as the only prospect of a security: that no obligation precludes us from demanding it, nor can any blame be imputed to us, if, as the superior power, we prescribe the terms of accommodation.”

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the estate, or the utmost that could be obtained from it. Your lordship will judge how far the end, supposing it attainable, could justify the means. To general Clavering, colonel Monion, and myself, it always appeared an arbitrary, unexampled act of power, without a shadow of right to support it. The principle on which it went annihilated every idea of private property, while in fact it has been ruinous to the country, for the sole benefit of the company's servants and their banyans. But even if the farms had, in every instance, been fairly allotted to the highest bidders, the measure could have produced no other consequence than that of forcibly alienating the whole landed property of the country in favor of indigent strangers and adventurers, equally ignorant of the value and circumstances of the farm, and careless how much they offered for immediate possession. The last settlement made by the COMMITTEE OF CIRCUIT promised an immoderate increase of revenue, at a time when the famine had swept away ONE THIRD of the inhabitants, and when the country was represented to be in a general state of decay. What the real object of the measure was, may be collected from the success of it.

“ The balances and remissions on the settlements of the last five years amount to the enormous sum of two hundred and thirty lacks of Sicca rupees. The plain truth is, that over-valuation and remission play into each other's hands. If the country be exorbitantly taxed, the governor and council *must* be trusted with a discretionary power to make remissions. This latitude once given, or assumed, it may be impossible to determine in what manner it is applied, or where the remissions centre at last, since the distribution may be so formed as to interest all parties in concealing it.

“ If we had no facts or experience to guide our conjectures, it is apparent that a country exposed to arbitrary variations in the annual assessments, at the discretion of a council of state, especially at this immense distance from the seat of empire, offers temptations which will not be ALWAYS resisted. Improvements in such a state of things are not to be expected, for who will employ his money or his labor in the cultivation of a soil that does not belong to him? or when he has no security that the whole produce may not be extorted from him by a new assessment?—The same system of taxation which annihilates the property, attacks the industry of the subject, and invades the *sources* of production.

“ A NEW PRINCIPLE must be assumed for the government of the country, or it MUST FALL. The plain and simple remedy is, to oblige the company to revert to their original principles, to renounce the unnatural character in which they have lately acted, and, if it be possible, TO BECOME MERCHANTS AGAIN.”



In addition to this demand, Mr. Hastings in the plan subsequently laid by him before the board, required "that the Mahratta government give such security for the personal safety of Ragonaut Row as *he himself* shall require; that a specific sum be demanded to reimburse the company for their late military charges; that a grant of territory be made contiguous to Bassteen; and that no European settlement be allowed on the Mahratta coasts without consent of the company." At the same time he communicated a plan formed by the presidency of Bombay, to reinstate Ragonaut Row in the peishwaship by force of arms, being invited to this enterprise by sundry members of the Mahratta government.

After much opposition from Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheeler, who had recently succeeded sir John Clavering as a member of the board, the governor's proposals were carried in council by his own casting vote; and it was finally determined to support Ragonaut Row, in the event of the infraction of the Poonah or Poorunder treaty, AS NOW EXPLAINED. Asserting that "the presidency of Bengal was in a condition to assist Bombay abundantly with men and money to carry on the Mahratta war," Mr. Hastings proposed to march a large detachment of the company's troops across the continent, for the purpose of reinforcing the Bombay army. This also being carried in the same manner, the destined reinforcement under colonel Leslie commenced this unprecedented march of 1100 miles early in May 1778.

Previous to this event, a letter was received from the court of directors, positively enjoining a strict adherence to the treaty of Poorunder. But Mr. Hastings, in a haughty and peremptory tone, declared "his unalterable determination to prosecute the measures in which he had now engaged to the utmost of his power."

In order to promote and corroborate the success of his project, Mr. Hastings had for some time past most assiduously

ously courted the friendship and alliance of the rajah of Berar, Moodajee Boosla, whose dominions occupied the intermediate space between those of the company and of the Mahratta states, inciting and urging that prince, who was far advanced in years, and of a mild and pacific disposition, openly to avow his claim to the sovereignty of the Mahrattas, to which the rajah had some obscure and remote pretensions. "In the whole of my conduct," says the governor general in a letter addressed to the prime minister of the court of Naigpore (November 1778), "I have departed from the common line of policy, and have made advances when others in my situation would have waited for solicitations; but I trust to the approved bravery and spirit of the Maha-rajah, that he will *ardently catch* at the objects presented to his *ambition*."

Moodajee Boosla was, however, so far from being willing to embark himself and his fortunes in the wild and crude projects of the English governor, that he wrote with his own hand a letter to Mr. Hastings, inculcating, in very respectful terms, and in a manner, which did equal honor to his head and his heart, the most just and salutary maxims of conduct both moral and political:—"Your friendly letter," says the rajah, "of the 19th Ramzan informs me that you have given directions to colonel Leslie to co-operate with the forces which I shall unite with his; that as you offer me the forces of the Circar to promote my views, you in return request the assistance of mine to effect your purposes; that having thus explained to me your sentiments and views, you wait only to know mine.—The having caused a translation to be made into English of the Hindoo books called the Shasta, &c. and keeping the pictures of the former kings of Hindostan before your eyes, from their lifeless similitudes to discover which of them were worthy of rule and possessed of good faith—also the endeavor to preserve the blessing of peace till *forced* to relinquish it—the supporting of every one in his hereditary

ditary right, and revenging the breach of faith and engagements, but, on the submission of the offenders, the exercise of the virtues of clemency and generosity—the not suffering the intoxication of power to seduce you into a breach of faith, and the giving support to each illustrious house, in proportion to its respective merits—these are the sure means of exalting your greatness and prosperity to the highest pitch. The ALMIGHTY disposes of kingdoms, and places whomsoever he pleases on the seats of power and rule; but makes their stability to depend on their peaceable, just, and friendly conduct to others. My conduct is framed on these principles—I have not yet recovered the shock of Mr. Elliot's death: had he survived, such strokes of policy would have been employed, that the suspicions of the Poonah ministers, from apprehensions of support being given to Ragonaut Row, which have caused them great uneasiness, would have been entirely removed.”

Notwithstanding the failure of this negotiation, Mr. Hastings was not to be deterred from the prosecution of his project. In proportion as difficulties presented themselves, his perseverance and pertinacity seemed to increase.

Colonel Leslie, who commanded the army now on its march to Bombay, dying October 1778, was succeeded by colonel Goddard. This able officer, after surmounting great and various obstacles, reached the southern banks of the Narbudda, within the territory of Berar, January 1779; and immediately detached lieutenant Wetherstone to the court of Naigpore, again to urge the rajah's accession to the proposed plan of operation. But the lieutenant, in his letters to colonel Goddard, declares that the government of Berar were determined not to take any active part whatever with the company's armies; that they had a thousand arguments to oppose to those he urged in favor of the plan for assuming the dignity of *ram rajah* of Setterah, *particularly* the faith pledged, and the alliance of friendship they had *sworn to*, with the present peishwa; that

that the asserting their pretensions to the sovereignty would meet with numberless oppositions; and that success could not be obtained without shedding much blood, and at the expence of violating the *sacred engagements* before entered into with them."

Mr. Wetherstone farther says, "that it seemed now to be the first wish of the court of Berar to set aside our connection with Ragonaut Row, the supporting of whom they asserted to be highly impolitical, and that in the end it would be fully proved so; that this chief, Ragonaut Row, was held in universal abhorrence; and that the prejudices against him in the Decan would not easily, if ever, be removed. And the rajah earnestly offered his mediation to make up all the existing differences."

About this period, likewise, letters were received by the governor general from Siccaram Pundit, prime minister of the Poonah government, containing heavy complaints of the conduct of the English since the conclusion of the treaty of Poorunder. "The government of Bombay from that period has, in every instance, he asserts, excited troubles and commotions, in violation of the ties of friendship; and notwithstanding the express stipulation to expel Ragonaut Row from the dominions of the company, they have performed nothing thereof. Out of regard to the friendship and alliance of the company, I call God to witness that the envoy of France was dismissed without negotiating with him. It is mutually incumbent upon us to observe the terms of the treaty."

And again, in a subsequent dispatch, the same minister says, "Notwithstanding the conclusion of the treaty, the Bombay government kept Ragonaut Row with them. It even appears to a conviction, that they *persuaded* Ragoba, i. e. Ragonaut Row, to the measures he has pursued. How then does the supreme authority of the council of Calcutta from the king of England appear, since the chiefs of the different settlements do not regard engagements  
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made by you as binding on them ? And you, sir, paying no regard to your own acts, take your measures on the representations of the government of Bombay. This is indeed astonishing to the highest degree ! It is the dictate of sound policy, that you withdraw your troops to your own territory. This will be a convincing proof of the sincerity of your friendship, and will spread the fame of your good faith throughout the universe. From the commencement of the government of the family of the peishwa, they have entered into treaties with many of the chiefs of the East and West, *and have never before experienced such a want of faith from any one.*"

In the mean time, pending these negotiations and the march of the Bengal army, the presidency of Bombay, possessed with high ideas of their own strength, confident of success, and jealous lest, by the arrival of the expected reinforcements, they should be obliged to divide the honor and profit of the expedition into the Mahratta country, with those of whose assistance they had no need, having made all the previous military preparations, and formally declared the treaty of Poorunder void, put their troops in motion November 1778.

The event of this expedition cannot be better related than in the words of Row Ghee, resident at the court of Poonah from the nabob of Arcot : " The English *Sardars*," says this intelligent observer, in a letter to the nabob, " with an army consisting of 700 Europeans, eight battalions of Sepoys, and 40 pieces of cannon, marched, as I have already wrote to your highness, from Bombay to the passes. Siccaram Pundit and Nana Furnese joined their forces, and satisfied the discontented chiefs, Scindia and Holcar, by giving them money, jaghires, and other presents. All the chiefs having met to consult, agreed unanimously " not to receive Ragonaut Row, since he came with an army of English, who were of a different nation from them, and whose conduct in Sujah Dowla's country

country, the Rohilla country, Bengal, and the Carnatic, *they were well acquainted with*. Otherwise, in the end they would be obliged to forsake their religion, and become the SLAVES of EUROPEANS." Upon this they exchanged oaths, and a great army was sent to occupy the Ghaut, or pass of Tullicanoon. Mr. Martyn, the Bombay resident at Poonah, had encouraged the English to believe, that as soon as their army should arrive at the Ghaut, Holkar would join them with all his forces. The English, trusting to this, waited there with impatience for a whole month, but no one appeared to join their standard. They then marched forward, although much harassed by the Mahrattas, who at length completely cut off their supplies of provisions.

The English then determined upon retreating back to the Ghaut; but Siccaram, gaining intelligence of their march, detached a large body of troops to intercept them. An obstinate engagement ensued on the 13th of January 1779, in which the English, being surrounded and overpowered, lost 200 Europeans and 1200 sepoys. No possibility of escape now remaining; and on the renewal of hostilities on the 15th, by a heavy cannonade from the Mahrattas, a gentleman, Mr. Farmer, advancing from the English camp, the firing ceased. The chiefs of the Mahrattas sent for him into their presence, and Mr. Farmer addressed them in the following words:—"We are only MERCHANTS—when disputes prevailed with you, Ragonaut Row came to us and demanded our protection. We thought he had a right to the government, and gave him our assistance.—Nothing but ill fortune attends him, and we have been brought to this miserable state by keeping him with us. You are masters to keep him from us. We shall henceforth adhere to the treaties that have formerly taken place between us; be pleased to forgive what has happened."

The minister answered, "Ragonaut Row is one of us—what right could you have to interfere in our concerns  
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with him? We now desire you to give up Salfette and Basseen, and what other countries you have possessed yourselves of. Adhere to the treaty made in the time of Bajalee Row†, and ask nothing else."

Next day at noon Mr. Farmer returned, and told Scindia "that he had brought a blank paper, signed and sealed, which the Mahratta chiefs will fill up as they pleased." Scindia told the chiefs, "that although they had it in their power to make any demands they pleased, it would not be advisable to do it at this time. For our making large demands would only sow resentment in their hearts, and we had better demand only what is necessary. Let Ragonaut Row be with us—let Salfette and the pergunnahs in Guzzerat be restored—let the Bengal army return back."

These articles being wrote out on paper, in Persian, Mahratta and English, sealed with the company's seal, were signed at Worgaum by general Carnac and seven officers. Hostages were given for the due performance of them. After this the Mahratta Sardars sent them victuals, which they needed much. The English and sepoy, grounding their arms, marched out escorted by 2000 Mahratta horse.

Intelligence of this disastrous event having reached Calcutta, Mr. Hastings declared in council, that general Goddard, in case of the failure of the Poonah expedition from Bombay, had his express orders to recur to his negotiations with Moodajee Boosla, which implied his return to Berar. But that officer, regardless of this strange instruction, proceeded by forced marches to Surat, agreeably to the requisition of the presidency of Bombay.—This government, in their dispatches to the supreme council, after stating the defeat of their army, have the effrontery to say, "that they did not think themselves obligated by the conditions of the subsequent treaty, but that, having intentions

† This treaty was made in September 1761.

tentions to enter into another, they had transmitted directions to general Goddard accordingly."

Mr. Hastings expressed his approbation of the tenor of this dispatch, and, declaring "that the treaty, being made by persons unauthorized to subscribe to such conditions, was invalid, proposed that general Goddard be commissioned to negotiate at the court of Poonah for the renewal of the treaty of Poorunder—and that the presidency of Bombay be required to prepare for service, whether offensive or defensive."

Mr. Francis entered in the council-book, his reasons for dissenting from the governor general, in a minute replete with good sense and sound policy. He admitted "the probability, that peace might be obtained on the terms of the treaty of Poorunder, provided this government be itself in earnest in pursuit of its present object, and suffered not itself to be entangled in the desperate schemes of those who now constitute the government of Bombay. The re-establishment of peace on the Malabar coast, I deem," said this wise and faithful counsellor, "to be essential, not merely to the prosperity of the India company, but to their existence. Let a war upon that coast be conducted how it may, the difference between conquest and defeat, in my judgment, is little more than the delay or acceleration of the ruin of all our resources. The annexed account shews that, during the last five years they have received little less than 116 lacks of current rupees directly out of the revenues of Bengal. Yet their bond-debt accumulated daily, and now amounts to 38 lacks. By the month of October, the president Hornby says, their finances will be utterly exhausted—in the interval they will want a supply of 30 lacks. Of this sum the president proposes to borrow 20 lacks, but doubts the possibility of raising so large a sum;—and if it could be borrowed, he says, they have no funds to pay even the interest. We should do well to consider how long we can maintain a war on such a footing,



footing, before we engage in it. I will not suppose the case of new miscarriages. Let it be admitted, that success and conquest are as certain as the most sanguine expectation can imagine, it does not follow that the objects to be obtained by them are such as we ought to aim at in our present circumstances, or that victory will pay its own expences. By extending our territorial possessions, we create irreconcilable enmity in the minds of those powers whom we immediately rob of their property. We fill every other Indian state with jealousy and alarm, and the territory we acquire comes wasted and depopulated into our hands. The nation now perhaps looks to Bengal as its last and greatest external resource. But if this demand upon us from home were not so pressing, and so likely to increase as I think it is, it is time for us to consider, whether there be in Great Britain a fundamental force equal to the tenure of unbounded acquisition at this distance from the seat of empire ; or whether we are not arrived at a point at which common prudence dictates to us to fix once for all the limits of our dominion. If my judgment were to prevail, it should be our object to CONTRACT them." To the whole of this most judicious and weighty minute of Mr. Francis, the governor general was pleased to declare, in very laconic terms, " that from his anxiety to avoid controversy, he should decline any reply."

A letter was then read by the governor, in answer to the dispatches from Bombay, which, though strongly objected to by Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheeler, received the sanction of Mr. Barwell, and of sir Eyre Coote, who had now taken his place at the board as commander in chief of the company's forces. In this letter, which is written in a style of such artful and studied confusion as to be in many parts really unintelligible, the governor, in name of himself and council, acquaints the presidency of Bombay, in terms which have at least the merit of being plain and explicit, " that the government of Bengal refuses to  
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ratify even the smallest tittle of the treaty or convention of Worgaum; that general Goddard was invested with full powers to conclude a pacification with the court of Poonah, on the terms prescribed in his instructions; and that, if the Mahratta ministers shall reject those proposals, and the company be reduced to the necessity of defending its rights by an open war, a latitude of action is left to general Goddard to avail himself of the situation which fortune shall present to him. With respect to Moodajee Boosla, it is confessed, that little hope is at this time entertained of his concurrence; but if, beyond expectation, the rajah shall discover a willingness to accept of the proposed alliance, instructions for that purpose are given to general Goddard. This negotiation is left," to adopt the strange and perplexed phraseology of this letter, "to the sole management of general Goddard, in the authority of those instructions, until the period of their suspension by the refusal or such hesitation of Moodajee Boosla as he shall deem sufficient to warrant his declaring the negotiation suspended. The future renewal of this negotiation we reserve to be determined by our express orders, but without revoking the credentials and instructions already granted to general Goddard respecting it." It would be hard indeed if the governor, in the event of any sinister catastrophe, could not, under the impenetrable veil of such mysterious ambiguity of direction, screen himself from any disagreeable responsibility.

Mr. Hastings, in order to enforce the general system of policy contained in this letter, moreover declared to the council, "that he never would suffer the object to be lost, for which the detachment now commanded by general Goddard was first appointed." This passed in the month of June 1779; and by a letter from general Goddard, dated October following, the governor and council are informed, as they had every reason to expect, "that the peishwa's minister had, in plain and positive terms, declared to him that his master would not accede to the proposals

posals made by general Goddard, or conclude peace with the English, unless Ragonaut Row, who had escaped, was delivered up to him, and Salsette surrendered to the Mahratta government; that, in consequence of this declaration, general Goddard had broken off the negotiation, and prepared for war." As was predicted by Mr. Francis, the whole Mahratta race, including the RAJAH of BERAR, together with Hyder Ally Khan, and the Nizam or Subah of the Decan, in the highest degree exasperated and inflamed at the treachery of the English government, now entered into an alliance, in conjunction with the French, to expel the English nation from India;—a combination of powers truly formidable, and which eventually shook the British empire in the East to its centre.

In the progress of the war, thus wantonly provoked, the government of Bengal soon found itself reduced to the extreme necessity for money to defray the enormous expense of its complex and extended operations. "Rolling his baleful eyes around," the governor general at length fixed them on the territory of Benares, a province depending on the Vizieriate of Oude, highly cultivated and populous, and the capital city of which, situated on the Ganges, has for ages been regarded by the Hindoos as a place of peculiar and indelible sanctity, as the seat and centre of their science, their laws, their philosophy and religion. The late rajah of Benares, Bulwant Sing, during the wars between the vizier and the company, had zealously attached himself to the English interest; and the court of directors, in their letter of May 26, 1768, acknowledge "the signal services he had rendered them; and they express their hope, that the attention paid to those who have espoused their interests in this war will *resore* their reputation in Hindostan, and that the Indian powers will be convinced that no breach of treaty will ever have their sanction."

Two years after this Bulwant Sing died, leaving the succession to his son, Cheyt Sing; and the council of Calcutta, Mr. Cartier being then president, interposed their influence and authority at the court of Lucknow, in order to procure from the vizier just and reasonable terms of settlement. It was finally agreed, that the rajah should pay to the vizier a *peishcush*, or fine, equivalent to about 200,000*l.* and that an annual advance of 30,000*l.* should be made to the stated tribute. A solemn deed of confirmation was then passed by the vizier, and the rajah was invested with the government, amid the loud acclamations of a numerous and happy people.

In the year 1773, at the immediate instance of Mr. Hastings, this grant was anew confirmed and ratified by the vizier, with the additional and express provision, that no increase of tribute shall ever hereafter be demanded; and that the government of Benares shall descend, on the terms of this agreement, to the heirs of the present rajah.

The governor general, knowing the enmity which had long subsisted between the vizier and the late rajah, declared himself "to be well convinced that the rajah's inheritance, and perhaps his life, are no longer safe than while he enjoys the company's protection, which is his due by the ties of justice and the obligations of public faith." In the following year, 1774, the governor general and council obtained the assignment of the sovereignty paramount of the province of Benares by treaty with the nabob vizier of Oude, "without any encroachment," to adopt the words of the act of council, "on the just rights of the rajah, or the engagements actually subsisting with him." And at the express recommendation of Mr. Hastings, by a new grant, farther privileges were conferred upon the rajah—viz. the sovereignty of the mint, and the rights of criminal justice in the last resort—the governor, in the record of this transaction in the council-book, making use of these remarkable words: "The rajah of Benares, from  
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the situation of his country, which is a frontier to the provinces of Oude and Bahar, may be made a serviceable ALLY to the company; but, to insure his attachment, his interest must be connected with it, which cannot be better effected than by *freeing him totally from the remains of his present vassalage, under the guarantee and protection of the company*; and, at the same time, guarding him against any apprehensions from this government, by thus PLEDGING its FAITH, that no encroachment shall ever be made on his rights by the company." Such were, at this period, the good-will and even generosity of Mr. Hastings, that he proposed to receive the tribute of the rajah, amounting to 260,000l. per annum, punctually and cheerfully paid in monthly assessments—not at Benares, but at Patna, the nearest provincial station, "lest the presence of a resident should in any manner frustrate the intention of rendering the rajah INDEPENDENT—eventually reducing him," as Mr. Hastings's extreme solicitude apprehended, "to the mean and depraved state of a mere zemindar.\*"

In this state things remained till, in the year 1777, the rajah had the misfortune to give great and mortal offence to the governor general—an offence, however unintentional, for which his final and utter ruin only could atone. In order to comprehend the nature of his delinquency, it is necessary to observe, that in the course of the preceding year, 1776, Mr. Hastings, whether actuated by motives of passion, caprice, or temporary discontent, had, in his private and confidential correspondence, authorised Mr. Maclean, his agent in England, to signify to the court of directors his desire to resign his office, and to request their nomination of a successor to the vacancy which would be

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thereby

\* It may be transiently remarked, without making any invidious application, as the time and occasion do not coincide with these concessions and indulgencies of the new governor, that amongst the presents privately received by Mr. Hastings, and which he originally meant, as he acknowledges, for ever to conceal, but which circumstances afterwards induced him to disclose, was the sum of 23,000l. or two lacks of rupees from the rajah Cheyt Sing.

thereby occasioned in the supreme council. The court, after appointing a committee to examine into the powers vested in Mr. Maclean, unanimously resolved to accept the said resignation, and named Mr. Wheeler to fill the vacancy occasioned by the same. A regular notification of this acceptance was immediately transmitted to India, and the dispatches were read in council, June 19, 1777. Mr. Hastings observing a profound silence on the subject of these dispatches, general Clavering addressed a letter to him on the following day, containing a formal requisition to the governor general to surrender the keys of Fort William and of the company's treasury. But Mr. Hastings, affecting surprise and indignation, peremptorily refused to comply with this demand—denying that his office was vacant, asserting that Mr. Maclean had exceeded his powers, and declaring his resolution to maintain his authority by every legal means. General Clavering, on the contrary, conceiving the office to be irrevocably vacated, and that he himself had legally succeeded to the government, issued summonses to the other members of the council, Mr. Barwell, and Mr. Francis, and in the presence of Mr. Francis took the oaths as governor general. On the other hand Mr. Hastings, supported by Mr. Barwell, issued directions to the commandant of the garrison of Fort William, to the provincial councils, and to the officers on the different military stations, enjoining them, at their peril, to obey no orders but such as should be signed by him or a majority of his council. Sir John Clavering, perceiving that Mr. Hastings was determined rather to risque a civil war than to resign the government, proposed a reference to the supreme court of judicature; to which Mr. Hastings, confiding in the *known integrity* of sir Elijah Impey, readily consenting, a decision was given in favour of Mr. Hastings.

But this judicial confirmation of his authority by no means satisfied the haughty and revengeful spirit of the governor.

vernor. Omitting, therefore, to summon sir John Clavering and Mr. Francis to the next meeting of council ; the governor, supported by the faithful Barwell, entered in the council-book a formal resolve, importing, " that general Clavering having USURPED the presidency of Bengal, had thereby relinquished and vacated the office of senior counsellor and commander in chief of the company's forces —and that, for the preservation of the legality of their proceedings, the said general Clavering be not in future summoned or admitted as a member of the council." This resolve was notified to sir John Clavering, and issued in general orders to the officers civil and military of the three provinces. At the ensuing meeting of council, Mr. Francis moved the reversal of these proceedings ; but Mr. Hastings declared his determination to adhere to them, saying, " That they were not the precipitate effect of an instant and passionate impulse ; but the fruits of long and *temperate deliberation*, and of the strictest sense of public duty." The chief justice Impey having his reasons for declining to support the governor in this exercise of his PUBLIC DUTY, Mr. Hastings thought proper to move a subsequent resolution in council, conformably to the advice of the judges, " That all parties be replaced in the same situation in which they stood before the receipt of the last advices from England."

Thus terminated this extraordinary business : but, most unfortunately for the rajah Cheyt Sing, on the first intelligence of general Clavering's advancement to the government, he had, with officious complaisance, deputed a *va-keel*, or ambassador, to congratulate the new governor on his accession. This, Mr. Hastings, in his subsequent justification, urges as a presumptive proof of the rajah's disaffection to the English government ; and the affront thus offered to him appears to have rankled in his proud and malignant mind, till he found a fit opportunity for gratifying his dire revenge. Conscious of his unlimited and uncontrollable

uncontrollable power, the governor proposed in council, July 9th, 1778, sir John Clavering being now deceased, "That the rajah of Benares should *consent* to the establishment of three battalions of sepoys, to be raised and maintained at his own expence;" and, notwithstanding the alarm of the rajah at the first intimation of this design, and the vigorous opposition of Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheeler, the resolve was carried into effect by the casting vote of the governor. The sum of five lacks of rupees, which was supposed to be equivalent to the expence of raising the three battalions, was demanded of the rajah to be paid in specie within five days; and in case of non-compliance, the resident Fowke was peremptorily enjoined to refrain from all further intercourse with him. The affrighted rajah paid the money without delay or hesitation. But the same demand being renewed the following year, he ventured to remind the governor in a most respectful letter, "that he was encouraged to believe the former demand would not be drawn into precedent. I am therefore hopeful," said he, "you will be kindly pleased to excuse me the five lacks now demanded, and that nothing may be demanded of me beyond the amount expressed in the *pot-tab*." In reply to this submissive application, the governor repeated his demand, that the rajah should, without evasion or delay, pay the five lacks of rupees—in case of his refusal, informing him that measures would be taken to oblige him to a compliance. The third year, the same demand being made, the rajah again entreated a remission, but without effect; and as a punishment for his *continued contumacy*, the governor general, of his own authority, imposed upon him an additional fine or mulct of 10,000l. These outrages failing to produce the effect intended on the mild and timid temper of the rajah, a sudden demand was made, in addition to the tribute and subsidy, to provide a body of 2000 cavalry for the service of the company. It was in vain that the rajah protested he had no n



than 1300 horse in his service; 500 of which, and 500 burkundaffes or match-lock men, should be ready to march to whatever place they should be sent. Mr. Hastings deigned no answer whatever to this representation, but declared, "that he was determined to convert the faults of the rajah into a public benefit—that he would exact the sum of 500,000*l.* as a punishment for his breach of engagements and other acts of misconduct—and that if the rajah should refuse the demand, he would deprive him of his government."

Mr. Barwell and Mr. Francis having by this time returned to England, and Mr. Wheeler only remaining in council, the sole power and responsibility of government centred in the person of Mr. Hastings. For the purpose of executing more effectually these preconceived designs, the governor determined upon a journey to Benares; previous to which he vested in himself, by a formal act, the entire powers of the supreme council. At the eve of his departure, however, he condescended to inform Mr. Wheeler, "that the offences of the rajah required punishment; and as his wealth was great, and the company's exigencies pressing, it was a measure of policy and justice to exact from him a large pecuniary mulct for their relief."

On the entrance of the governor general into the province, he was met by the rajah in person with a magnificent attendance. Nevertheless, to shew his confidence in the justice of the governor, he entered alone the pinnace in which the governor had proceeded up the Ganges, and, in a lowly and suppliant manner, putting his turban in his lap, entreated his favor. He was, however, repulsed with great arrogance; and on the arrival of the governor at Benares, he received an injunction from Mr. Hastings not to enter his presence without his permission.

On the succeeding day, the governor sent articles of accusation to the rajah, importing, 1. That he had endeavored to excite disorders in the government on which

which he depended. 2. That he had suffered with impunity the perpetration of robberies and murders, even in the streets of Benares, to the great and public scandal of the English name. 3. That he had delayed the payment of the sums required of him for the company's service: and, 4. That he had not complied with the demand of cavalry—all of which amounted, as the governor asserted, to a direct charge of disaffection and *infidelity* to the government on which the rajah depended—And to these articles of impeachment he demanded an immediate answer. On the evening of the same day, the rajah sent in his defence, denying, in the most positive manner, the truth of the aforesaid articles. "My enemies," said he, "with a view to my ruin, have made false representations to you. Now that, *happily for me*, you have yourself arrived at this place, you will be able to ascertain all the circumstances: 1. relative to the horse; 2. to my people going to Calcutta; 3. the dates of the receipts of the particular sums above mentioned. I have never swerved in the smallest degree from my duty to you. It remains with you to decide on all these matters. I am in every thing your slave. What is just I have represented to you—May your prosperity increase!" At this reply the governor expressed great wrath, declaring it to be less a vindication of the rajah than a re-primand on him; and that it was couched in terms of defiance, manifesting a dangerous spirit of independency.

In consequence of the rajah's offensive and audacious conduct, Mr. Hastings conceived himself obliged to adopt some decisive plan—and an order was therefore immediately issued to put the rajah under an arrest in his own palace. To this indignity the rajah, shocked as he appeared to be, submitted with the most passive humility: "He hoped," he said, "that the governor would allow him a subsistence in consideration of his father's services—but as for his zemindary, his forts and his treasures, he was ready to lay them at his feet, and his life if required."

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Being at once dejected with the ignominy, and dismayed with the danger of his situation, furrounded by a guard of sepoys with their swords drawn, he wrote to the governor—"Whatever be your pleasure, do it with your own hands. I am your slave. What occasion can there be for a guard? It depends on you alone to take away, or not to take away, the country out of my hands."

The highest alarm and astonishment being excited in the city of Benares, by this arrest of the rajah, great numbers of the people assembled round the palace, nor could the earnest and repeated entreaties of their prince restrain them from acts of violence—and believing the person of the rajah, who was much beloved by his subjects, to be exposed to extreme hazard, they at length broke through the enclosure, and falling suddenly upon the guard of sepoys and English officers, nearly the whole were cut to pieces. In the tumult the rajah made his escape over the walls of his palace by means of a cord formed of turbans tied together; and, crossing the Ganges in a boat, fled to a place of refuge, whence he directed a suppliant letter to Mr. Hastings, to which the governor affirmed "he did not think it becoming him to reply." On the contrary, leaving Benares with precipitation, he ordered the rajah's troops to be every where attacked, as if the rajah had been in avowed and open rebellion. So inconsiderable, notwithstanding, was the force by which he was attended, that the governor acknowledged the fate of the British empire in India to be exposed, by these daring, or, to speak more properly, these rash and frantic measures, to the most imminent danger; for the fate of the empire he supposed, at this critical moment, to be closely connected with that of his own person. "Mean as its substance may be, its accidental qualities," says the governor general, "were equivalent to those which, like the characters of a talisman in the Arabian mythology, formed the essence of the state itself." By a confession humiliating in proportion

proportion to its truth he declares, "*that EVERY STATE around would have RISEN IN ARMS against the ENGLISH; and EVERY SUBJECT of their own dominion would, according to their several abilities, have become an ENEMY.*" These few lines contain perhaps the bitterest satire ever written upon any government, or upon any system of despotism and oppression, that has impudently assumed the name.

The troops in the province of Benares being, however, quickly re-inforced, the territories of the rajah were completely reduced. The rajah having himself made his escape to the camp of the Mahrattas, orders were given by Mr. Hastings to seize upon the fortrefs of Bidjegur, the residence of the rannee pauna, mother of Cheyt Sing, represented as a woman singularly amiable and virtuous, and against whom no delinquency was even pretended. The treasures of the rannee being very considerable, she was desirous to capitulate upon conditions, in order to save something from the wreck of her fortunes. But Mr. Hastings wrote to the commander; major Popham, "I think every demand the rannee has made to you, except that of safety and respect for her person, unreasonable.—I apprehend that she will contrive to *defraud* the captors of a considerable part of the booty, by being suffered to retire without examination. But this is your consideration, and not mine. As to making any conditions with her for a provision, I will never consent to it." In a second letter he says, "If she delays the surrender beyond the term of twenty-four hours, it is my positive injunction that you put a stop to the negotiation, *and on no account renew it*—Nor will I grant her ANY CONDITIONS WHATEVER; but leave her exposed to those dangers she has chosen to risk, rather than trust to the CLEMENCY and GENEROSITY of our government."

The castle being accordingly surrendered within the time specified, the articles of the capitulation, by which an allowance of 15 per cent. was reserved to the rannee,

were

were nevertheless shamefully and outrageously broken, the person of the rannee and her attendants grossly insulted, and their effects plundered. Notwithstanding the efforts and representations of major Popham the commander, a man of humanity and honor, no redress was obtained from the governor, who, now wholly intent upon the vindication of his conduct, evidently resulting from the most obdurate pride and steadfast hate, had caused a great number of affidavits and depositions, aiming to prove the existence of a conspiracy against the English government, to be taken by sir Elijah Impey, who *happened* at this time, in the course of *an excursion for the benefit of his health*, to be fortunately resident at Benares.

In his subsequent famous narrative of this transaction to the court of directors, Mr. Hastings hesitated not to assert, "that the rajah of Benares had no claim to the title or privileges of a prince—that the deeds which passed between him and the board upon the transfer of the zemindary in 1775 were not to be understood to bear the quality and force of a treaty between equal states—that the payments to be made by him were not a tribute, but a rent—that, being nothing more than a *common zemindar*, he owed a personal allegiance and *an implicit and unreserved obedience* to the authority of the company, at the forfeiture of his zemindary, and even of his life and property\*." Conceiving

\* Perhaps the records of history do not exhibit a position more enormously extravagant, than that the sovereign of a province in the interior parts of Hindoistan, exercising the powers of government over a happy and consenting people, should owe *implicit and unreserved obedience* to a company of traders inhabiting a *barbarous island* on the other side of the globe. In vindication of the arbitrary and excessive fine of 500,000*l.* imposed by Mr. Hastings on the rajah, the governor, in his MINUTES OF DECREE, pretends, "that, notwithstanding the privileges guaranteed to the rajah, the *right of fine* was expressly reserved to the company:"—and he affirms this right to be woven in the texture of the Mogul government. If so, it is evident that all stipulations for the payment of a specific tribute are trifling and ridiculous. But his authorities most egregiously fail him. 1. He tells us that the vizier Sujah ul Dowla levied a fine on the death of the father for the investiture of the son.—True: but the agreement was, in this case, on both sides optional—the zemindary or principality not being hereditary in the family of Bulwant Sing till so declared by the subsequent treaty of

ceiving it possible, nevertheless, that these extraordinary positions might stagger the faith of some perverse or sceptical persons, he thought proper to subjoin an argument which could not fail to operate in his favor, viz. "That, if he *had* acted with an unwarrantable rigor, and even INJUSTICE, towards Cheyt Sing; yet, first, if he did believe that extraordinary means were necessary, and those exerted with a strong hand, to preserve the company's interests from sinking under the accumulated weight that oppressed them—or 2dly, if he saw a political necessity for curbing the overgrown power of a great member of their dominion, and to make it contribute to the relief of their pressing exigences—that his error would be excusable, as prompted by an *excess of zeal* for the company's interest operating with too strong a bias upon his judgment.

After the deposition of the rajah Cheyt Sing, Mr. Hastings, in virtue of the commission with which he had invested himself, exercised an authority over the province of Benares nothing less than despotic. Setting aside all former agreements, although evidently made with the rajahs not in their personal but political capacity, he increased the tribute, or stated rent-charge, from 260,000 to 400,000l. per annum. Having bestowed the government on a youth called Mehip Narrain, a descendant by the mother from the rajah Bulwant Sing; he, in addition to the tribute, imposed such heavy and grievous duties on merchandize, as threatened the absolute annihilation of their commerce; charging moreover pensions on the revenues of the province, and sending large bodies of troops into the territory of Benares, to be maintained by the oppressed and impoverished inhabitants,

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1773. 2. He alleges, that when the right of the mint was transferred to the rajah, it was articulated, that the proper weight and standard should be preserved by the rajah, under pain of forfeiting the mint, and being *liable to any penalty* the board might think proper to impose. But in this, as in the former instance, the rajah voluntarily accepted the grant with the condition annexed. Yet from these premises Mr. Hastings preposterously infers, that the enormous fine arbitrarily imposed by him was "consonant to the engagements between the company and the rajah."

The father of the new rajah, Durbitzee Sing, who was appointed guardian and administrator to his son, was by Mr. Hastings in a short time deposed from his office, on a vague and general charge of mal-administration and DEFICIENCY in his PAYMENTS, and thrown into prison. His property being confiscated, and his person endangered, he in a short time died, overwhelmed with distress and ruin.

“ When a new system was to be formed with the successor of Cheyt Sing,” says Mr. Hastings, “ I saw no objection to making the company’s interests my *first principle of action*. The easy accumulation of too much wealth had been Cheyt Sing’s ruin. It had buoyed him up with extravagant and ill-founded notions of independency, which I much wished to discourage in the future rajah. Some part, therefore, of the superabundant produce of the country I turned into the coffers of the sovereign, i. e. the company, by an augmentation of the tribute.”

Here the grand object of the British government in India, as administered by Mr. Hastings, is openly and undisguisedly avowed—*The filling the company’s coffers with money*, was by him held to be the *first principle of action*. Happy would it indeed have been for the inhabitants of Hindostan, if even this abominable and infamous principle had been pursued by rational and politic means, such as would have secured, unimpaired, the *sources of prosperity*, though for the mere purpose of subsequent plunder and emolument.

On the deposition of Durbitzee Sing from the regency, a man of obscure origin, one Jagher Deo Sheo, was exalted to this dangerous pre-eminence. This new minister, warned by the fate of his predecessor, extorted the tribute money and other duties imposed by the governor, with the most rigorous severity. The trade and cultivation of the province having in a short time declined in an incredible degree, the resident at Benares declared to the  
board

board at Calcutta, that the collection of the revenue was become very difficult. But of this fact the governor general himself gave the most decisive attestation. Passing through the province of Benares, in his progress to Lucknow, in the spring of 1784, he declares, in a letter addressed to the council at Calcutta, "that he was *fatigued* with the clamors of the discontented inhabitants. Though the drought of the preceding summer might contribute to heighten the distress, the governor acknowledges there is reason to believe that the cause existed principally in a defective, if not a corrupt and oppressive administration. The avowed principle, says he, on which the present administration acts, is, that the whole sum fixed for the revenue of the province *must* be collected, and that the deficiency arising in places where the crops have failed, must be supplied from the resources of others where the industry of the cultivators has been more successfully exerted.

"In the management of the customs, the exorbitant rates exacted by an arbitrary valuation of the goods, the practice of exacting duties twice on the same goods, first from the seller, and afterwards from the buyer, and the vexatious disputes and delays drawn on the merchants by these oppressions, were loudly complained of. Under such circumstances, we are not to wonder if the merchants of foreign countries are discouraged from resorting to Benares.

"One evil I must mention, because it has been verified by my own observation, and is of that kind which reflects an UNMERITED REPROACH on our general and national character.—When I was at Buxar, the resident, at my desire, enjoined the naib to appoint creditable people to every town through which our route lay, to *persuade and encourage* the inhabitants to remain in their houses, promising to give them guards, as I approached, for their protection.—But to my great disappointment, I found every place through



through which I passed ABANDONED. I am sorry to add, that from Buxar to the opposite boundary, I have seen NOTHING but TRACES of COMPLETE DEVASTATION in EVERY VILLAGE.—I cannot help remarking, that, except the city of Benares, the province is in effect without a government. The administration of the province is mis-conducted, and the people oppressed; trade discouraged, and the revenue in danger of a rapid decline from the violent appropriation of its means.”

Such is the picture, drawn by the hand of the master artist, of the blessed effects of British government in India!—In order to remedy these evils, the governor proposed to eject the new administrator from his office; which was soon afterwards accordingly done, and a temporary administration for the government of the province substituted, without however making any provision for a reduction of taxes, or a remission of tribute. The oppression of Jagher Deo Sheo being doubtless, in the eyes of the governor, a crime of much less magnitude than the impunctuality of his predecessor Durbitzee Sing, he escaped with a simple dismissal, without incurring the penalties of fine, imprisonment, and death.

If the conduct of Mr. Hastings in relation to the province of Benares should be deemed liable to serious exception, it is to be feared that an examination of his system of policy respecting the vizierate of Oude, a far more extensive scene of operation, will tend but little to redeem his character. It must suffice, for this is not a professed history of the administration of Mr. Hastings, lightly to touch upon a few leading points of this too fertile topic.

The terms of the treaty concluded in the year 1765 with the vizier Sujah ul Dowla, by the late lord Clive, left that great and powerful province in a considerable measure dependent upon the company. From this fatal period the decay and desolation of the vizierate commenced.

menced. For to come into contact with the English government, seemed universally and instantly to produce a sort of political paralyfis. The annual revenue, which was estimated at more than three millions, had sunk in the year 1779 to less than one million and a half. The vizier had contracted to maintain at his own expence a brigade of the company's troops in his service, for so long time as he might deem them necessary for the defence of his country. But the court of directors, in their letter to the governor and council of the 15th of December 1775, expressly say, "If you intend to exert your influence, first to induce the vizier to acquiesce in your proposal, and afterwards to compel him to keep the troops in his pay during your pleasure, your intents are unjust, and a correspondent conduct would reflect great dishonor on the company." But Mr. Hastings had long learnt to hold the orders of his superiors in contempt, and to set their authority at defiance. The nabob Asoph ul Dowla, who had succeeded his father in the vizierate, February 1775, making very earnest supplication to be relieved from this burden, which the reduced state of his revenue rendered him utterly unable to support; Mr. Hastings without hesitation declared "the relief desired to be totally inadmissible;"—farther affirming, "that the *tone* in which the demands of the nabob were asserted, gave cause for the most alarming suspicions;" though it is difficult to conceive how language more submissive and humble could have been adopted.

"During three years (says the nabob) the expence occasioned by the troops in brigade, and others commanded by European officers, has much distressed the support of my household, inasmuch that the allowances made to the seraglio and children of the deceased nabob have been reduced to one fourth of what it had been. The attendants and servants of my court have received no pay for two years past, and applications from my father's private creditors

ditors are daily pressing upon me. All these difficulties I have for three years struggled through, and found this consolation therein, that it was complying with the pleasure of the honorable company, and in the hope that the supreme council would make enquiry, from impartial persons, into my distressed situation: but I am now FORCED to a representation. From the great increase of expence, the revenues were necessarily farmed out at a high rate, and deficiencies followed yearly. The country and cultivation is ABANDONED; and as to the European troops, the nabob declares that they brought nothing but confusion into the affairs of his government, and were entirely their own masters."

Far from being moved by these representations, the governor general declared, in his instructions transmitted to the resident Purling at the court of Lucknow, "that the nabob stands engaged to our government to maintain the English armies formed for the protection of his dominions, and that it was OUR part, and not HIS, to judge and determine in what manner and at what time these shall be reduced and withdrawn." And in a minute of consultation on this subject, at the council board, Mr. Hastings asserted, "that the arrangement of measures between the British government and the native powers of India must, in case of disagreement about the necessity thereof, be decided by the STRONGEST."

This being his avowed system of policy, it can excite no wonder that the government and country of Oude should proceed, with rapid and accelerated progress, to the extremity of political distress and ruin. Mr. Hastings himself, towards the close of his administration, thus, in a minute of council, expresses his sense of the situation of the vizier:—Our alliance has proved the extinction of his sovereignty, and the impoverishment of his country and revenue."

In the year 1781, a commission of delegation having been executed at Calcutta, investing Mr. Hastings with

the entire powers of the supreme council, the governor general resolved to visit the province in person. At a meeting which took place at Chunar, on the confines of Benares, a secret treaty was concluded by the governor with the vizier, containing several articles of an extraordinary nature; and it has been said, that no treaty ever contained so much treachery in so small a compass. By this time the claims upon the nabob, on various grounds and pretences, arose to the enormous sum of 2,785,000*l.* sterling, which was considerably more than two years nett produce of the nabob's revenues. In order to liquidate this debt, Mr. Hastings urged the nabob, and an article to this effect was inserted in the treaty of Chunar, to a general resumption of the jaghires, or government assignments upon land, throughout the province, to the amount of many hundred thousand pounds annual rent, including the provisions made by the former nabob-viziers for their princes of the blood, and the antient friends and dependents of their family. The estates thus confiscated were re-let on rack rents and at the same time mortgaged to rich bankers of Benares, to supply the immediate wants of the English government.

A GIFT from the vizier of 100,000*l.* was also at this period accepted by Mr. Hastings; which being, as he confessed, a sum of too great magnitude to be concealed, he, after some deliberation, thought proper to apprize the court of directors of this violation of *their* commands, and of his *own oath*. But he nevertheless had the presumption to express his hope "that, in consideration of his long and faithful services, and the sums he had expended from his private fortune upon their account, they would permit him to apply this donation to his own use.

The confusion and distress consequent on the late violent expedient of resumption, and other devices of extortion, it is impossible in adequate terms to describe. The whole fabric of civil government seemed to totter, and verge upon annihilation and anarchy. The regular  
authority

authority of the magistracy, and the administration of justice, totally ceased ; and no power was visible but that of the farmers of the revenue, attended by bodies of troops to enforce the collections. The country was, declared by one of the nabob's ministers to be " a speaking picture of famine and woe." " From the total want of police," says the resident Bristow, " hardly a day escapes but I am informed of some tragical event, whereof the bare recital is shocking to humanity : " and he confesses that his feelings are sensibly hurt, and his compassion strongly excited, by the disgraceful and miserable state of poverty to which the brothers of the nabob are reduced. From three of these princes, Mirza Ali, Mirza Hyder, and Mirza Sief, the resident received an affecting representation or a memorial, in which they say,— " Our situation is not fit to be told—For two years we have not received an hubba on account of our *tuncaw* (assignment on the revenue). It is surprising, having such a friend as you, our situation is arrived at that pass that we should be in distress for bread and clothing—YET we are the sons of Sujah ul Dowla ! " But the heart of Mr. Hastings never in any instance counteracted the designs of his head, and the wretched inhabitants of Oude were destined to see yet greater abominations than these.

The mother and wife of the late nabob kept their court at the city of Fyzabad, where, after the custom of the east, they lived in much magnificence, having the charge of educating the numerous offspring of the deceased sovereign, and of maintaining a household consisting of 2000 persons. To support this vast expence, the nabob had left them a large proportion of his treasures, and had settled upon them *jaghires* suitable to their high rank and dignity, and to the importance of the trust committed to them ; solemnly and earnestly recommending at the same time the interests of his family to the guardian care and protection of the company, by whom their possessions had been subsequently and authentically guarantied. By



the treaty of Chunar, nevertheless, the present nabob was authorized by Mr. Hastings to seize upon the jaghires, or landed estates, of these illustrious relatives, and to allow them *persons* equal to the amount. And this, the governor pretended, was conformable to the Mahommedan law †. The nabob appearing nevertheless manifestly reluctant to carry this odious project into execution, Mr. Hastings signified his pleasure to *his own* resident at Lucknow, Mr. Middleton, "that as this measure originated with the English, and was intended for their benefit, the execution was to be FORCED upon him,"—although the express words of the treaty of Chunar were merely, "that the nabob be *permitted* to resume such jaghires as he may think necessary."

In order to impart some color of justice to this outrage, depositions the most futile and ridiculous were, as recently at Benares, extra-judicially made before sir Elijah Impey, who unexpectedly presented himself in the course of his progress, after leaving Benares, first at Chunar, then at Lucknow. For this magistrate so miserably degraded his character and station, as to become a principal agent in this business. And such was the silent celerity of his movements, that the chief justice has been with humorous allusion compared to the Ghost in Hamlet, exclaiming in almost every quarter at the same instant, "SWEAR!"

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† Soon after the decease of Sujah ul Dowla, a dispute arose between Asoph ul Dowla his successor, and the begums his relations, respecting the proportion of treasure which legally appertained to them; and the board of Calcutta, taking cognizance of this matter, unanimously decided (sir John Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, then sitting at the board) that by the Mahommedan law the princesses were entitled only to the property of their husbands within the zenana or seraglio where they resided. The begums cheerfully acquiesced in this decision; in consequence of which, a vast sum was refunded by them, and their remaining treasure secured by a formal guarantee, in which Mr. Hastings concurred, though, as he insinuates, without responsibility, "being then an inefficient member of the board." But for Mr. Hastings to appeal to the KORAN as a sanction for his subsequent enormities, is, to adopt the language of Mr. Sheridan, in his famous speech of February 7, 1787, "as if there were something in the institutions of Mahommed, that made it meritorious for a christian to be a savage—that rendered it criminal to treat the inhabitants of India with humanity or mercy—that even made it impious in a son not to plunder his mother!"

These affidavits, founded on vague and incoherent rumors, were designed to prove, that the princesses of Oude fomented the insurrection at Benares, and were even engaged in a plot for the dethronement of their own son, and the utter extirpation of the English nation. Very little stress, however, was at this crisis placed by Mr. Hastings on the validity of these proofs, which were evidently calculated to answer a different and distant purpose\*.

"Your pleasure," says Mr. Middleton, "respecting the begums I have learnt from sir Elijah Impey.—Finding the nabob wavering in his determination about the resumption of the jaghires, I this day ordered the necessary *perwannabs* for that purpose. But before they were transcribed, I received a message from the nabob, entreating that I would withhold them till the morning. As it is possible that the nabob, seeing the business will at all events be done, may make it an act of his own, I have consented to *indulge* him in this request."

The nabob at length issued his *perwannabs*, but with extreme reluctance, and, to use the language of Mr. Middleton, "after much trifling evasion and puerile excuses;"—the irresistible effusions, no doubt, of that natural affection which it is so difficult totally to eradicate from the human heart, but which by men hardened in villany is regarded as fond and childish imbecility. "At the same time the nabob declared," says Mr. Middleton, "both to me and his ministers, that it was an ACT OF COMPULSION."

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\* Major Marfack, in the course of his examination at the bar of the house of commons, May 8, 1785, being asked whether there was any reason to believe that the begums had, in conjunction with other powers, formed a plan for the extirpation of the English? answered, "that such a thing was too absurd to be credited by any person knowing the position of affairs at that time in India." He acknowledged "that a universal disaffection prevailed throughout all the provinces of Oude, owing to the measures of our government, and the unheard-of oppressions of colonel Hannay, the commander of the English troops; the effects of which appeared in deserted villages and uncultivated tracts of land from one end of the country to the other.—That on colonel Hannay's departure for Benares, the inhabitants arose in a tumultuous manner; and he professed his belief that all men under their situation and circumstances, who possessed the feelings and spirit of men, would have extirpated us if in their power."

In a subsequent letter Mr. Middleton informs the governor, that the vizier, wishing to evade the measure of resumption, suggested to him, that the debt of the company might be better and more expeditiously liquidated by taking the amount at once from the treasures left by his father. With all the eager rapacity of a bird of prey, which in the act of seizing with out-stretched beak its helpless quarry aims to grasp another victim also in its talons, Mr. Hastings, still insisted upon the resumption of the jaghires, declared his resolution also to seize the treasures; enjoining upon the agent Middleton, under menaces of a dreadful responsibility, the execution of this barbarous act, in the following peremptory terms:—"You yourself must be personally present. You must not allow any negotiation or forbearance, but must prosecute BOTH SERVICES until the begums are at the entire mercy of the nabob." In conformity to this order, the British resident, at the head of a body of troops, accompanied by the terrified vizier, marched to Fyzabad, and with little or no resistance stormed first the town and then the castle. The chief officers of the household, the eunuchs Jewar Ali Khan and Bahar Ali Khan, persons of distinguished rank, who had been in high trust and favor with the late nabob, were ignominiously thrust into confinement, in order to extort from them the discovery of the treasures and effects committed to their care. In consequence of these severities, the bhow begum, i. e. the mother princess, at length consented to the surrender of her treasures, hid in the most secret recesses of the palace, to the amount of the bond debt due from the nabob to the company. But avarice is insatiable as the grave. Another demand of 120,000l. was made for the balance pretended to be due *since* the execution of the bond: and to enforce compliance, the two eunuchs were, by order of the resident Middleton, committed to close custody, put in irons, and kept from all food. To raise this sum, great part of the furniture of the palaces, the  
jewels



jewels and other effects of the begums, even to the wardrobe, were disposed of by public sale.

Fully apprised of the distressful situation of the princesses, Mr. Hastings could, nevertheless, write at this period to the resident Middleton as follows:—"The nabob having consented to the resumption of the jaghires held by the begums, and to the confiscation of their treasures, and thereby involved my own name, and the CREDIT of the COMPANY, in a participation of both measures, I have a right to require and insist on the complete execution of them, and I look to you for their execution, declaring that I hold you accountable for it\*."

It may easily be imagined, that the pensions allotted to the begums and other jagheerdars, in lieu of their jaghires, would be very ill and defectively paid. In the month of March, 1782, the officer on duty at Fyzabad, major Gilpin, wrote to the resident:—"The women belonging to the khord mohul, or lesser palace, are in want of every necessary of life, and are driven to that desperation, that they threaten to throw themselves from the walls of the zenana." In a subsequent letter it is said, "The women in the zenana assembled last night on the tops of the building, crying in a most lamentable manner for food."—And in a third letter—"The repeated cries of the women for subsistence have been truly melancholy. They beg most piteously for liberty, that they may earn their daily bread by laborious servitude, or to be released from their misery by immediate death." At length the company's resident, Mr. Bristow, ventured, of his own authority, very little  
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\* Mr. Hastings has indeed in his defence alleged, that he was ignorant of many transactions imputed to him respecting the business. But of those which were in any degree material to substantiate the charge of criminality, he could not plead ignorance. "If Mr. Middleton did not give him an exact account of the groans that were heaved, the tears that were shed, the weight of the fetters, or the depth of the dungeon, he stated," says Mr. Sheridan (vide his speech June 1788), "every important step that was taken, in the progress and winding up of this relentless tragedy." In fact, nothing of moment was done without the express command of Mr. Hastings; for even Mr. Middleton, "a fellow by the hand of nature marked to do a deed of shame," discovered no symptoms of alacrity in the execution of his direful commission.

to the satisfaction of Mr. Hastings, to order the removal of the troops, and the release of the prisoners Bahar and Jewar Ali Khan, who had now been confined and in irons for near twelve months. "The quivering lips," says the commander of the troops at Fyzabad, speaking of their enlargement, "and the tears of joy stealing down the poor men's cheeks, was a scene truly affecting."

The distressed of the zenana nevertheless still continued, and the women, breaking by frantic violence the sacred bounds of the palace, exhibited themselves in this state of degradation and despair to the astonished inhabitants of Fyzabad, in the public bazar or market-place of that great and populous city. But after this act of desperation they do not appear to have been permitted to suffer equal extremity.

In a letter from the bhow begum to the resident Bristow, this unfortunate princess says: "An accusation was framed against me, which I had never conceived even in idea, of rendering assistance to rajah Cheyt Sing. Having seized my head eunuchs, Jewar Ali Khan and Bahar Ali Khan, they obliged them to sign a bond for sixty lacks of rupees. They were thrown into prison with fetters about their feet, and denied food and water. I, who had never even in my dreams experienced such an oppression, gave up all I had to preserve my honor and dignity.—My sufferings did not terminate here. The disturbances of colonel Hannay and Mr. Gordon were made a pretence for seizing my jag-hire. The state of the matter is this: When colonel Hannay was by Mr. Hastings ordered to march to Benares, during the troubles of Cheyt Sing, the colonel, *who had plundered the whole country*, was incapable of proceeding from the union of thousands of zemindars, who had seized this favourable opportunity. They harraressed Mr. Gordon near Junivard, and opposed his march. Mr. Gordon forded the river upon his elephant. In the mean time a letter was received by me from colonel Hannay, desiring me to escort Mr. Gordon to Fyzabad. As my friendship for

for the English was always sincere, I readily complied, and sent some companies of Nejeebs to escort Mr. Gordon and all his effects to Fyzabad; where having provided for his entertainment, I effected his junction with colonel Hannay. The letters of thanks I received from both these gentlemen are still in my possession. But is it not extraordinary that, notwithstanding the justness of my cause, nobody relieves my misfortunes?"

In the letter of colonel Hannay, referred to by the begum, that officer, in the oriental phraseology, says: "Begum Saib of exalted dignity! Your exalting letter, fraught with grace and benevolence, I had the honor to receive in a fortunate moment. Your faithful servant reposeth his most unbounded hopes and expectation upon your highness, that Mr. Gordon may arrive at Fyzabad without apprehension or danger." And Mr. Gordon expresses himself in a still higher strain of respect and gratitude—"begum Saib of exalted dignity and generosity! Your gracious letter, in answer to the petition of your servant from Goondah, exalted me. The welfare of your servant is entirely owing to your favor and benevolence. Continue to exalt and honor me with your gracious letters—May the sun of prosperity continually shine!"

When the intelligence of these astonishing transactions reached the court of directors, that assembly, in which an high sense of honor and virtue, *occasionally discoverable*, too unavailingly contended against the suggestions of ambition and interest, ordered a letter to be written to the governor and council, in which they say, with reference to the iniquitous and enormous plan of seizure and resumption, "WE HOPE and TRUST, for the honor of the British nation, that this measure appeared FULLY JUSTIFIED in the eyes of all Hindostan. It no where appears, from the papers *at present* in our possession, that they, the begums, excited any commotions previous to the imprisonment of Cheyt Sing; and only armed themselves in consequence of that transaction; and it is probable, that such a conduct proceeded

proceeded from motives of self-defence, under an apprehension that they themselves might likewise be laid under unwarrantable contributions." And the court expressly ordered an ENQUIRY to be instituted into this matter, and, if the charge proved to be unfounded, that their jaghires should be restored.

If the directors of the company really entertained any serious doubt as to the light in which this daring act of atrocity appeared in the view of the inhabitants of Hindostan, it would be instantly decided by the testimony of major Brown, Mr. Hastings's *own resident* at the court of Dehli, who, in a letter addressed to Mr. Bristow, resident at Oude, informs him, that in a conference he had lately held with Mirza Shuffee Khan, prime minister of the mogul, speaking of the situation of the begums, that minister told him, " There is not a man in HINDOSTAN who will attribute the act to the vizier of Oude, but EVERY ONE will fix the odium on the English, who might easily, by the influence they so largely exercise, have prevented such unnatural conduct. This step," he said, " must DESTROY ALL CONFIDENCE in the English nation throughout Hindostan, and excite the bitterest resentment in all those who by blood are connected with the house of Sudsar Jung. If," said this generous mussulman, " the vizier can so little regard his honor or his duty, as to wish to disgrace his father's mother for a sum of money, let him plunder her of all she has, and send her safe to Dehli or Agra; and, poor as I am, I will furnish subsistence for her, which she shall possess with security, though it cannot be adequate to her rank." As to the ENQUIRY enjoined by the court of directors, Mr. Hastings positively refused compliance, alleging " that it was in effect an order for the justification and acquittal of the begums; and that it would be productive of evils greater than any which exist in the consequences which have already taken place, and which time had almost obliterated. " Let us," said the governor in his minute of council, " at least permit them

them to be judges of their own feelings, and prefer their complaints before we offer to redress them. The MAJESTY OF JUSTICE ought to be approached with solicitation, not descend to provoke or invite it." And wrapped in the veil of conscious innocence, he declares with calm and intrepid countenance, " that whatever may happen of the events which he dreads, he had at least this consolation remaining, that, in the annals of the natives of India HE shall not be remembered amongst their oppressors."

His general system of policy must therefore be presumed in his own opinion right; yet in his dispatch of April 30, 1784, he passes the severest and most unequivocal censure upon it, by recommending to the court of directors, " as his last and ultimate hope, that their wisdom would put a final period to the ruinous and disreputable system of INTERFERENCE, whether avowed or secret." And he hesitates not to assert, in his subsequent dispatch of October 1784, a very short time before his departure from India, and which may therefore be regarded as a sort of dying confession extorted by the resistless force of truth, " that to no other purposes than those of VENGEANCE and CORRUPTION will agents armed with authority exercise their powers."

The affairs of Oude cannot with propriety be dismissed, without transiently noticing the case of the province of Ferruckabad, a territory, like Benares, depending upon the vizieriate. Ahmed Khan, late nabob of Ferruckabad, in the war between the vizier and the company, had, as well as Bulwant Sing, shewn a marked and too partial predilection for the English interest. After the commencement of the system of peace, alliance, and *subsidy*, the tribute due to the vizier from this province was assigned over to the English in part of payment; and a *sezwawall*, i. e. a sequestrator, appointed by the vizier, at the instance of the English government, in order to enforce the collection; which in consequence of this arrangement

was paid, not to the nabob, but to the English resident at Oude. The effects of this plan soon became visible.

In the month of May 1780, Mr. Hastings stated to the board at Calcutta the condition of the province in the following terms:—"To the total want of all order, regulation, or authority in this government, it may, among many other obvious causes, no doubt be owing, that the country of Ferruckabad is become an almost entire waste, without cultivation or inhabitants; that the capital, which but a very short time ago was distinguished as one of the most populous and opulent commercial cities in Hindostan, at present exhibits nothing but scenes of the most wretched desolation and misery—the nabob himself scarcely commanding the means of bare subsistence." On account of the hardships and indignities to which the nabob was subjected by the conduct of the sezawall, and of which he had preferred frequent complaints, Mr. Hastings proposed the removal of the sequestrator, and the appointment of an English resident in his room, declaring "that a LOCAL INTERFERENCE was indispensably necessary for realizing the vizier's just demands." But by an article of the treaty of Chunar, in the following year, it was stipulated that the English resident be recalled. And in excuse of his conduct, Mr. Hastings declared to the board of council, "that if the nabob of Ferruckabad, Muzuffer Jung, *must* endure oppression, and he DARE NOT at this time propose his total relief, it concerns the reputation of our government to remove *our* participation in it." As to these oppressions, however, he on another occasion unaccountably asserted, that, "whether they were well or ill founded, he never had an *opportunity* to ascertain,"

The sezawall being thus reinstated, the country was again subjected to the most shocking ravages, inasmuch that Mr. Hastings himself, of his own authority, ordered the collector to be removed, and the territory of Ferruckabad to be left to the sole management of its natural prince,

prince. But of this *singular* act of goodness Mr. Hastings afterwards complained, "that the resident of the nabob Muzuffer Jung at Calcutta had the insolence to report that it was PURCHASED." He therefore formally withdrew his protection, and the sezawall was a third time re-appointed to his former office. "This was attended," to adopt the words of the governor general, "with an aggravated renewal of the severities formerly exercised;" and the prince himself, in a letter addressed to Mr. Hastings, says: "The miseries which have fallen upon my country, and the poverty and distress which have been heaped upon me by the re-appointment of the sezawall, are such that a relation of them would, I am convinced, excite the strongest feelings of compassion in your breast; but it is impossible to relate them. On the one side, my country ruined and uncultivated to a degree of desolation which exceeds all description: on the other, my domestic concerns and connections involved in such a state of distress and horror, that even the relations, the children and wives of my father are starving in want of daily bread, and are on the point of flying voluntary exiles from the country, and from each other." This letter, written in February 1783, Mr. Hastings did not lay before the board till October following, being, as he then asserted, withheld from causes not necessary to mention.

He now, however, thought it once more incumbent upon him to propose the removal of the sezawall, and the re-appointment of a British resident at Ferruckabad. But the end and purpose of this appointment were completely frustrated by a subsequent letter, rendering him liable to dismissal at the pleasure of the vizier. And the resident Willes, a man of acknowledged probity, declared, in his letter of 24th April 1785, "that the situation of the country was more distressful than when the nabob addressed himself for relief in 1783; and that he was sorry to say that his appointment at Ferruckabad was of no use. Ferruckabad,"

ruckabad," says he, "once the seat of great opulence and trade, is now daily deserted by its inhabitants—its walls mouldering away, without police, without protection. The ruin that has overtaken this country is not to be wondered at, when it is considered, that there has been no state, no stable government for many years;—no authority sufficiently predominant to establish any regulations for the benefit of the country, whilst each authority has been exerted, as opportunity offered, for temporary purposes."

SUCH was the state of things in the vizierate of Oude and its dependencies, when Mr. Hastings resigned the government of India in the spring of the year 1785. "If," exclaimed on a very memorable occasion a just celebrated parliamentary orator†, "a stranger had at this time gone into the kingdom of Oude, ignorant of what had happened since the death of Sujah Dowla, that man, who with a savage heart had still great lines of character, and who, with all his ferocity in war, had with a cultivating hand preserved to his country the riches which it derived from benignant skies and a prolific soil—if this stranger, ignorant of all that had happened in the short interval, and observing the wide and general devastation, and all the horrors of the scene—vegetation burnt up and extinguished; villages depopulated and in ruin; temples unroofed and perishing; reservoirs broken down and dry—he would naturally enquire, What war has thus laid waste the fertile fields of this once beautiful and opulent country? What civil dissensions have happened, thus to tear asunder and separate the happy societies that once possessed those villages? What disputed succession? What religious rage has with unholy violence demolished those temples, and disturbed fervent but unobtruding piety in the exercise of its duties? What merciless enemy has thus spread the horrors of fire and sword? What severe visitation of providence

† Vide Sheridan's speech in Westminster-hall, June 1788.



dence has thus dried up the fountains and taken every vestige of verdure from the earth? Or rather, What monsters have stalked over the country, tainting and poisoning with pestiferous breath what the voracious appetite could not devour?—To such questions what must be the answer? No wars have ravaged these lands and depopulated these villages—no civil discords have been felt—no disputed succession—no religious rage—no merciless enemy, no affliction of providence, which, while it scourged for the moment, cut off the sources of resuscitation—no voracious and poisoning monsters—NO; all this has been accomplished by the friendship, generosity, and kindness of the English nation—They have embraced us with their protecting arms, and, lo! THESE are the FRUITS of their ALLIANCE.”

Previous, however, to the blissful æra of the final departure of Mr. Hastings from India, various other incidents of importance took place; to which, in order to complete the picture of his ever-memorable administration, it is now necessary to advert.—It must be called to recollection, that, after the conquest of Rohilcund by the nabob vizier Sujah ul Dowla assisted by the arms of Britain, Fyzoola Khan was confirmed in the government of Rampore and its dependencies by the treaty of Lall-dang. Conformably to the provisions of this treaty, Fyzoola Khan was permitted to retain in his service 5000 troops, and not a single man more. Also, with whomsoever the vizier should make war, it was stipulated, that Fyzoola Khan should send 2 or 3000 men, according to his ability, to join the forces of the vizier;—and that, if the vizier should march in person, Fyzoola Khan should himself accompany him with his troops. Fyzoola Khan is described by the resident Middleton, as “a man of sense, not possessed with the passion of ambition; but, applying himself peaceably to the improvement of his country, it increased greatly in riches and revenue.” But peace and prosperity seemed,  
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in the view of Mr. Hastings, to constitute the most unpardonable species of delinquency: and it has been remarked of him, that his favorite and habitual maxim of policy was, "*that where there is treasure there is treason.*"

In the years 1777 and 1778, being greatly alarmed at the resumption of a number of jaghires by the young vizier, and the general oppression prevailing in the government of Oude, Fyzoola Khan made repeated and earnest applications to the company for a renewal of his treaty with the vizier—originally attested by colonel Champion—under the guarantee of the company as the only power in which he had confidence, and to which he could look up for protection. This was at length granted with the concurrence of the vizier, to whom, as well as to the company, presents were made on the occasion; "such as became the gratitude of one party to offer, and the dignity of the other to receive."

On the breaking out of the war between England and France, Fyzoola Khan voluntarily offered to maintain 2000 cavalry for the service of the company; for which Mr. Hastings, in the name of the supreme council, returned him the warmest thanks, and acknowledged his claim on the generosity no less than the justice of the British government. But, in the course of the following year, Mr. Hastings suggested to the vizier to make a requisition of 5000 cavalry from the rajah of Rampore; although, according to the most rigid construction of the treaty, he was bound to contribute this quota only when the vizier took the field in person. He represented therefore, in respectful terms, "his inability to comply with this demand—that the whole force allowed him was only 5000 men, of whom 3000 were infantry—the aid of whom was necessary for the concerns of his jaghire." On this Mr. Hastings passed a resolve in council, himself and Mr. Wheeler being the only remaining members, importing, "that the nabob Fyzoola Khan had evaded the perform-

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ance of the treaty with the late vizier Sujah ul Dowla, to which the *honourable company* were guarantees, as to the troops which he is obliged to furnish on the condition by which he holds the jaghire granted to him." And in a letter to the vizier Mr. Hastings says, "Demand *immediate delivery* of 3000 cavalry;" and if he should evade or refuse compliance, he advises to make a formal protest against him for breach of treaty.

It being already ascertained that Fyzoola Khan had but 2000 cavalry in his service, the court of directors, in their subsequent dispatch, hesitated not to declare, "that the said demand carried with it the appearance of a determination to create a pretext for depriving him of his jaghire entirely, or to leave him at the mercy of the vizier." This demand, however, being peremptorily made, Fyzoola Khan offered, in addition to his 2000 cavalry, a body of 1000 foot, with one year's pay in advance, and regular funds for their payment in future. But the agent, Johnson, deputed on this business, informed him that his orders were, not to receive any palliation, but a negative or affirmative. In consequence of this refusal of an impracticable demand, the vizier proposed to Mr. Hastings "to resume the grant, and to leave Fyzoola Khan to join his other faithless brethren who were sent across the Ganges."

By the third article of the treaty of Chunar, permission was accordingly given to the vizier, "when time shall suit, to resume the said grant,"—although, in the council minute justificatory of this act, the conduct of Fyzoola Khan is expressly said "not to amount to an absolute breach of treaty, but to be uncandid, evasive, and unfriendly." The time, however, not being as yet judged *suitable*, an intimation was given to the nabob, that, in lieu of his military services and other claims of the vizier and company, a commutation in money, consisting of a tribute and fines, would be more acceptable—the former being fixed at 20, the latter at 30 lacks. The nabob, in reply,

declared, through his vakeel at Lucknow, "that it clearly appears to be intended to deprive him of his country; as the high demand now made it would be impossible for him to comply with. To a chief thus deprived the *honourable company* had been accustomed to grant some allowance. This he expected from the governor's bounty; but if he should be disappointed, he would set off upon a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and renounce the cares of the world. He directs his vakeel to ascertain whether the English intended to deprive him of his country; for, if they do, he is ready to resign it upon receiving an order from the resident."

The real views of the governor in this instance extended, however, no farther than the extortion of money; and his adamant heart being also, perhaps, a little softened by the extreme humility of this declaration, an agreement was at length made to free the nabob from all obligations of military service, in consideration of the annual tribute of 15 lacks, which Mr. Hastings confessed, "to be an ample equivalent for the precarious claims of the vizier." And being now in the humor to make extraordinary concessions, the governor farther declared, "that the rumors which had been spread of the nabob's hostile designs against the vizier were totally groundless—and if he had been *inclined*, he had not the *means* to make himself formidable. On the contrary, being in the decline of life, and possessing a very fertile and prosperous jaghire, it is more natural to suppose that Fyzoola Khan wishes to spend the remainder of his days in quietness, than that he is preparing to embark in active and offensive scenes, which must end in his own destruction." This is the more remarkable, as Mr. Hastings, in reply to some severe animadversions of the court of directors on his conduct respecting Fyzoola Khan, had held a language totally contrary. The directors having expressed their wishes to be considered rather as the guardians of the honor and property

erty of the native powers, than as the instruments of their oppression;" Mr. Hastings concluded his vindication of the whole of these tyrannical proceedings in the following insolent words: "SUCH are the measures which we shall ever wish to observe towards our allies or dependents on the frontiers."

It must not be wholly omitted, though the vast field of investigation and discussion to which it leads can, in the *prospectus* of general history, be viewed only in remote and obscure vision, "that on the departure of Mr. Francis from India early in 1781, Mr. Hastings, upon whom the entire powers of government devolved, immediately dissolved the provincial councils, and established a COMMITTEE OF REVENUE, with powers in the highest degree despotic. The general renewal of leases coming under the consideration of this board, they determined, "that as to the period of the leases, it appeared best to the committee to limit them to one year." In this respect the committee of revenue were less lenient than the preceding famous committee of circuit. And they acted in direct contradiction to the former opinion of Mr. Hastings, solemnly declared, "that the farmer, i. e. the government lessee, who holds his farm for one year only, having no interest in the next, takes what he can with the hand of rigor—he will be tempted to exceed the bounds of right, and to augment his income by irregular exactions, and by racking the tenants, for which pretences will not be wanting where the farms pass annually from one hand to another. On the contrary, from long leases, the farmer acquires a permanent interest in his lands—he will, for his own sake, lay out money in assisting his tenants, in improving lands already cultivated, and in clearing and cultivating waste lands."—All the evils so clearly foreseen, and so little regarded by Mr. Hastings, added to those arising from the vilest and grossest corruption and speculation, took place under this system; the chief administra-

tor and manager of which was one Govind Sing, a wretch loaded, as Mr. Hastings himself acknowledged, with reproaches; and of whom it stands upon record, "that there was scarcely a family of rank in the three provinces whom he had not some time or other distressed and afflicted—scarce a zemindary that he had not dismembered and plundered."

During the long administration of Mr. Hastings, various momentous incidents occurred in the subordinate governments or departments of government in India; but of these a cursory mention must suffice. Mahomed Ali Khan, nabob of Arcot, had by means too obvious to need explanation, acquired an unbounded influence over the counsels of the government of Madras. Supported by the aid and authority of that presidency, under the express sanction of the governor and council of Bengal, the nabob, on frivolous pretences, declared war against the rajah of Tanjore, a neighbouring prince and ancient ally of the company; and, seizing his dominions, annexed them to his own territory. The court of directors, highly indignant at this unjust and violent usurpation, determined upon the restoration of the rajah: and for this purpose lord Pigot, a nobleman who had formerly been employed in the Indian service, and whose character, both in a civil and military capacity, stood deservedly high, was appointed to the government with positive orders to that effect. His lordship arrived at Madras the latter end of the year 1775; and notwithstanding all the opposition and the temptation thrown in his way, he accomplished the grand object of his appointment, in the reinstatement of the rajah. Disputes running extremely high in the council in consequence of this measure, the governor, in the autumn of 1776, suspended two of the members from their functions, by a doubtful and dangerous assumption of authority. But ample revenge was soon after taken by the remaining mal-contented, in the arrest  
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and imprisonment of his lordship, who survived this daring outrage but a very short time.

In the session of parliament which began November 1778, admiral Pigot, brother to lord Pigot, brought this affair in all its circumstances before the house of commons; and after stating, in a series of resolutions, the principal facts relative to this catastrophe, he concluded with moving an address to his majesty, "humbly praying, that George Stratton, esq. and the other members of the council of Madras, be prosecuted for ordering their governor and commander in chief to be arrested, and confined under a military force—they being returned to England, and now within the jurisdiction of his majesty's courts of Westminster Hall."

Notwithstanding the labored justification of Mr. Stratton, who was a member of the house, these resolutions were unanimously carried. These gentlemen, being in the sequel tried and convicted in the court of king's bench, were, to the amazement of the public, sentenced only to pay a trifling fine—and the laws which they had set at defiance in India, seemed to be put in execution against them only to excite their contempt in England.

In the last session of 1781, of which the history has been in part related, the affairs of India again attracted the attention of parliament, in consequence of a petition presented to the house of commons from the governor and council at Calcutta, a second from the British settlers, and a third from the native inhabitants of Bengal, against the supreme court of judicature established by the regulating act of 1773. The two former were drawn up in a very masterly style, and demonstrated, in a striking manner, the temerity and folly of those who could attempt to ingraft the laws and juridical maxims of England upon the antient usages and immemorial institutions of Hindostan. The petition of the natives is remarkable for its pathos and simplicity "When," say the petitioners, "the

“ the ordinances of this court of judicature were issued, as they were all contrary to the customs, modes, usages, and institutions of this country, they occasioned terror in us; and day by day, as the powers of this court became more established, our ruin, uneasiness, dishonor, and discredit, have accumulated. We are now driven to the last extremity. Several who possessed means and ability have banished themselves from the country; but we do not all of us possess the means of flight, nor have we power to abide the oppression of this court. If, which God forbid! this our petition should not be accepted, giving ourselves up with resignation to our fate, we will sit down in expectation of death. After this, LET the soil of the country remain, and the court of justice—LET the court of justice remain upon the earth, or the earth cover it!”

On a motion by general Smith for referring these petitions to a committee, Mr. Boughton Rous took occasion to contrast the established policy of ancient Rome with that adopted by England: “ In all subjection of territory contiguous to her own,” said this able speaker, “ Rome gave her own laws, if the people wished to receive them; or she allured them by immunities and honourable distinctions. Thus she assimilated all the petty states of Italy to her laws and manners, till the whole peninsula became one nation.—But in her distant conquests she pursued a very different policy. In these she was satisfied to hold the supreme government, to possess the revenues and military powers, leaving the inhabitants to conduct their internal police by their own native magistrates and laws; avoiding any insult to the religion or prejudices of the vanquished. Much better would it be for Britain to imitate, in this respect, the conduct of the ancient Romans, than to persist in rash and injudicious attempts to impose the laws of England upon the natives of India.”

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Many of the judicial decisions of the supreme court, as stated to the house, also wore the aspect of the most flagrant violence and injustice†: and a general conviction seemed

† Of these perhaps the most remarkable was the decision given by the chief justice in the famous PATNA CAUSE. It had been the practice of the provincial courts established under the English government, to refer questions of Mahomedan law to the cawzee and muftees—ancient and known judicial officers under the former government. A cause of great importance respecting a disputed property, referred, in the accustomed manner, by the council of Patna to the cawzee Sadhi and two muftees his assessors, being decided by them in a mode which approved itself to the public judgment as highly equitable and satisfactory, an *action of trespass* was nevertheless brought in the supreme court against the cawzee and muftees by the losing party. The action being admitted to lie, the cawzee was arrested by warrant of the chief justice, to the consternation and astonishment of the inhabitants, in the public streets of Patna, when returning to his habitation from the exercise of the duties of his office. The sheriff having the execution of the writ was directed not to admit the cawzee or his assessors to bail under the enormous sum of 400,000 rupees: and had it not been for the interposition of the provincial council, the defendants must have been dragged to Calcutta, at the distance of 500 miles, and have languished in prison till their doom was determined. “The seizure of the cawzee in this disgraceful manner,” say the provincial council of Patna in their letter to the supreme council of Calcutta, “coming from the execution of his office, has struck a general terror into the inhabitants of this city; we thought it therefore expedient, for the honor of government and the preservation of its authority, to offer the bail required for the enlargement of one of its first officers.—How can we expect,” say they, “the other officers of these courts to carry any orders of consequence into execution, till they are assured of safety and protection in the discharge of their duty?”

The circumstances of cruelty and atrocity attending this business are fully detailed in the second article of impeachment exhibited against sir Elijah Impey, in the house of commons, December 12, 1787, by sir Gilbert Elliot. In the sequel, the decision of the cawzee was, upon grounds the most scandalously frivolous and futile, reversed by the supreme court; and the cawzee and muftees condemned to pay damages and costs to the amount of 300,000 rupees, which was in effect a sentence of perpetual imprisonment. The cawzee Sadhi, being aged and infirm, in a short time sunk under the weight of this persecution; the other defendants remaining in prison upwards of two years, till they were set at liberty by express orders from England, commanding not only their release, but the restoration of the muftees to the offices they had before occupied with fair and unsullied characters.

As a specimen of the evidence on which the chief justice's sentence of reversal was founded, a small part of the examination of one Cojah Zekeerah may be cited: sir Elijah Impey declaring from the bench, the testimony of this man to be consistent and unimpeached. It was adduced to prove and establish the authenticity of various signatures professing to witness a certain devise or deed of conveyance, styled, in the technical language of the Mahomedan courts, the *bebenamah*, on the validity of which the merits of the whole cause absolutely depended.

Q. Who wrote the writing which is round the seals?

A. What is wrote about my own seal and that of Ghyrut Beg in the bebenamah, I remember writing myself; but the other three I do not remember

seemed to be momentarily excited, of the radical absurdity and erroneoufness of the present system. Nevertheless, the weight of regal influence, ever jealous and abhorrent of reform in every shape; the natural partiality of the minister to his own original plans, and the pressure of affairs still

member writing. I am sure that above the seal of Mazum Beg is not mine—that around Ullah is not my writing.

Q. You must know your hand-writing—answer, Is it your hand-writing, YES or NO?

A. It is not.—It is not in my *memory* that it is. I do not *remember* it, if it is my hand-writing.—IT MAY BE SO.

Q. You must know your hand-writing—you need not look at it so frequently.

A. If it is, it may be I do not *recall* it. If it may be, it may be I do not *recollect* it. IT IS CERTAINLY MY HAND WRITING.

Q. Now you have sworn it is your hand-writing, and that it is not, which is true? One or the other of them must be true.

A. IT IS MY HAND WRITING.

Q. You did not see Mahomed Iwaz write Ullah; therefore, why did you write *under* it?

A. I remember that when Ghyrut Beg affixed his seal, as he could not write, the deceased, Shawbaz Beg Khan, desired me to write over it; and having procured Iwaz to write in my absence Ullah, he desired me to write Ullah.

Q. You have said, I think, that you never saw the hebenamah after your own seal was put to it; and till after the death of Shawbaz Beg Khan; and that when you did put your seal to it, the other seals were not put to it, nor the signature Ullah: How came you now then to say, that, after the seal of Ghyrut Beg was put to it, and the signature Ullah, that Shawbaz Beg Khan desired you to write upon the hebenamah?

A. It is true, that when he desired me to put my seal to it, there was no other seal than his. But about the same time, or a day after, when the other witnesses witnessed it, I was by, and he desired me to witness it. I was *always* present with Shawbaz Beg Khan.

Q. Were you by when Mahomed Iwaz wrote the word Ullah?

A. I was not present then. When Imayet Ullah Beg and Ghyrut Beg put their seals to it, I was present.

Q. Why—if you did write under, the word Ullah, as you now say you did—why did you not immediately say that you did write under it?

A. I was in doubt about my own hand-writing: and, having sworn, I was cautious in acknowledging it.

Q. What did you mean by saying that you never saw the paper after you had put your seal to it till after the death of Shawbaz Beg Khan, if Shawbaz Beg Khan did in fact produce it to you to write upon it at any time after you had put your seal to it?

A. It is not a contradiction. After all the seals were put to it, after that time, I meant to say, I never saw it till after the death of Shawbaz Beg Khan.

Q. Is all the writing over the seals of your hand-writing?

A. The LAST is not my hand-writing.

Q. Look to it, and be sure.

A. This *is* also my hand-writing.

Q. Why did you say it was not your hand-writing when it is?

A. I did not *remember* writing it: but on seeing it is the same flow of the pen, I acknowledge it to be my hand-writing.

still more urgent, prevented the adoption of any great or decisive measures of relief. From the contracted genius and policy of the existing administration, nothing great, decisive, or comprehensively beneficial, could indeed be expected. A bill was, however, introduced and passed, explanatory of the powers of the supreme court of judicature, and in some points limiting and restraining its jurisdiction, which had been extended, by the arbitrary encroachments of the chief justice, far beyond the real and obvious intent of the regulating act.

At this period the war in India had become very general; a most formidable combination of the country powers in opposition to the English had taken place, which, assisted by the fleets and armies of France, seemed to menace the very existence of the empire of Britain in India. Hyder Ali, the antient and inveterate enemy of the company, in the month of July 1780 broke into the Carnatic with a vast army, and committed the most dreadful ravages. On the 10th of September he attacked and surrounded a considerable detached corps under colonel Baillie, which were entirely cut to pieces or made prisoners. He then attacked and made himself master of Arcot; and scarcely did the Government at Madras believe itself to be in safety, when sir Eyre Coote arrived to take the command of the company's forces on the coast of Coromandel, and Hyder was in repeated engagements foiled and defeated by this fortunate and gallant veteran.

Various naval encounters also took place between the French and English fleets, commanded by M. Suffrein and admiral sir Edward Hughes, with equal skill, courage and success. The naval force of both nations was gradually increased, in the progress of the war, to a degree far beyond what had been known at any former period in India, amounting at the last, on the part of the British, to eighteen ships of the line of battle. But the proportion continuing nearly the same, the mutual accessions of strength  
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served only to increase the number of human victims : and the successive battles being obstinately and even heroically contested, the blood shed in this unavailing contest was uncommonly great.

To enter into the detail of such transactions can answer no valuable purpose, except it be to exhibit the miseries of war in their genuine colors, divested of that fascination which accompanies the idea of victory, though attended perhaps to the victors themselves with no solid advantage, to the vanquished with all the horrors of distress and ruin. Doubtless, in every region of the world wisdom and humanity exist more than sufficient, could they be brought into action, to remedy these fatal and inexpressible follies ; but it is melancholy to reflect how small a portion of either falls to the lot of the generality of those by whom the affairs of the world are conducted ; and how remote, and on a transient survey almost hopeless, is the prospect of any essential amelioration in the system of human policy†.

A secret committee having been appointed, in the year 1781, to enquire into the causes of the Mahratta war, and

† “Voici,” says the celebrated Monarch of Prussia, “l’erreur de la plupart des PRINCES,” i. e. of the men styled in the vocabulary of human folly, most serene, most gracious, and most sacred sovereigns ! “Ils croient que Dieu a créé exprès et par une attention toute particulière pour leur grandeur, leur félicité, et leur orgueil, cette multitude d’hommes dont le salut leur est commis ; et que leurs sujets ne sont destinés qu’à être les instrumens et les ministres de leurs passions déréglées. Dès que le principe dont on part est faux, les conséquences ne peuvent être que viciées à l’infini : & de là ce désir ardent de tout envahir, de là la dureté des impôts dont le peuple est chargé, de là la paresse des princes, leur orgueil, leur injustice, leur inhumanité, leur tyrannie, et tous ces vices qui dégradent la nature humaine. Si les princes se défaisoient de ces idées erronées, et qu’ils voulussent remonter jusqu’au but de leur institution, ils verroient que ce rang dont ils sont si jaloux, que leur élévation n’est que L’OUVRAGE DES PEUPLES.—Ce principe ainsi établi, il faudroit qu’ils sentissent que la vraie gloire des princes ne consiste point à opprimer leurs voisins, point à augmenter le nombre de leurs esclaves, mais à remplir les devoirs de leurs charges, et à répondre en tout à l’intention de ceux qui les ont revêtus de leur pouvoir, et de qui ils TIENNENT LA GRANDEUR SUPREME†.” Such is the ingenuous and noble confession of the royal historian and philosopher, and such the language which at Berlin is applauded as the effusion of a magnanimous and enlightened patriotism, and in London stigmatized, and perhaps punished, as the result of disaffection to the government, if not amounting to actual sedition and conspiracy.

† OEUVRES DE FREDERICK III. tome iv.

and that in the Carnatic ; a very able report was brought up early in the session of 1782, by the lord advocate of Scotland, Mr. Dundas, chairman of the committee, in which the general system of policy pursued by the governor general Hastings was reprobated in terms of extreme severity. Mr. Dundas in the course of his speech said, “ that the governor had no right whatever to fancy he was an Alexander or an Aurengzebe, and to prefer frantic military exploits to the improvement of the trade and commerce of the country.”

Sir Thomas Rumbold also, who had recently relinquished the government of Madras, was criminated as guilty of gross peculation, embezzlement, and oppression. General Smith, in moving that the report of the secret committee be referred to a committee of the house, took notice that sir Elijah Impey, his majesty's chief justice in India, had so far degraded his character and office, as to accept of a place under the company, contrary to the solemn engagements under which he held his appointment†. An address was in consequence presented to the king, to beseech his majesty to recall sir Elijah Impey from India to answer for his conduct. A bill was likewise brought in by the lord advocate, Mr. Dundas, for inflicting certain pains and penalties on sir Thomas Rumbold, for high crimes and misdemeanors. This bill, which at first excited very great expectation and attention, and which was continued from session to session in a manner wholly unprecedented, was at last suffered to sink into neglect and oblivion.

On the 28th of May 1782, the house of commons passed a series of resolutions, in the most decisive terms condemnatory of the whole system of Indian politics. The last resolution

† The place thus accepted by sir Elijah Impey was that of judge of a court of appeal, established at Calcutta under the appellation of the court of Sudder Dewannee Adawlet, whose jurisdiction extended over the inferior provincial courts of Mofussell Dewannee Adawlet. To this office, held at the pleasure of the governor and council, with a salary of 8000*l.* per annum, sir Elijah Impey was advanced a few months previous to his memorable expedition to Benares and Oude.

declared, through his vakeel at Lucknow, "that it clearly appears to be intended to deprive him of his country; as the high demand now made it would be impossible for him to comply with. To a chief thus deprived the *honourable company* had been accustomed to grant some allowance. This he expected from the governor's bounty; but if he should be disappointed, he would set off upon a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and renounce the cares of the world. He directs his vakeel to ascertain whether the English intended to deprive him of his country; for, if they do, he is ready to resign it upon receiving an order from the resident."

The real views of the governor in this instance extended, however, no farther than the extortion of money; and his adamant heart being also, perhaps, a little softened by the extreme humility of this declaration, an agreement was at length made to free the nabob from all obligations of military service, in consideration of the annual tribute of 15 lacs, which Mr. Hastings confessed, "to be an ample equivalent for the precarious claims of the vizier." And being now in the humor to make extraordinary concessions, the governor farther declared, "that the rumors which had been spread of the nabob's hostile designs against the vizier were totally groundless—and if he had been *inclined*, he had not the *means* to make himself formidable. On the contrary, being in the decline of life, and possessing a very fertile and prosperous jaghire, it is more natural to suppose that Fyzoola Khan wishes to spend the remainder of his days in quietness, than that he is preparing to embark in active and offensive scenes, which must end in his own destruction." This is the more remarkable, as Mr. Hastings, in reply to some severe animadversions of the court of directors on his conduct respecting Fyzoola Khan, had held a language totally contrary. The directors having expressed their wishes to be considered rather as the guardians of the honor and property

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It must not be wholly omitted, though the vast field of investigation and discussion to which it leads can, in the *prospectus* of general history, be viewed only in remote and obscure vision, "that on the departure of Mr. Francis from India early in 1781, Mr. Hastings, upon whom the entire powers of government devolved, immediately dissolved the provincial councils, and established a COMMITTEE of REVENUE, with powers in the highest degree despotic. The general renewal of leases coming under the consideration of this board, they determined, "that as to the period of the leases, it appeared best to the committee to limit them to one year." In this respect the committee of revenue were less lenient than the preceding famous committee of circuit. And they acted in direct contradiction to the former opinion of Mr. Hastings, solemnly declared, "that the farmer, i. e. the government lessee, who holds his farm for one year only, having no interest in the next, takes what he can with the hand of rigor—he will be tempted to exceed the bounds of right, and to augment his income by irregular exactions, and by racking the tenants, for which pretences will not be wanting where the farms pass annually from one hand to another. On the contrary, from long leases, the farmer acquires a permanent interest in his lands—he will, for his own sake, lay out money in assisting his tenants, in improving lands already cultivated, and in clearing and cultivating waste lands."—All the evils so clearly foreseen, and so little regarded by Mr. Hastings, added to those arising from the vilest and grossest corruption and speculation, took place under this system; the chief administra-

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have ventured from his own dominions.—He saw the extremity to which we were reduced, and seized the occasion to distress us where he knew we were most vulnerable.”

But the conduct of Mr. Hastings, subsequent to the restoration of peace in India, is perhaps the most extraordinary, certainly the most mysterious part of his dark and inextricable policy. The peace concluded with the Mahrattas, it has been already remarked, was followed by an alliance of the most strict and confidential kind. And from that period it seemed to be the great and favorite object of the English governor general, to confirm and aggrandize the power of that state, which he had ever before affected to consider as most formidable and adverse to the English interests; and whom he had even styled “the NATURAL ENEMIES of the company.”

In the month of March 1783, Mr. Hastings dispatched, by no authentic act, but as his own secret agent, major Browne to the court of Dehli, in order to make proposals to the emperor, Sha Allum, to enter into engagements with the company and the Mahratta government, for the accomplishment of certain designs in favour of the emperor, but of a very hostile nature to several powers of the continent then in amity with the company. And major Browne was commissioned to offer to the mogul, to provide for the entire expence of any troops the emperor might require; which proposal was accepted with every symptom of eagerness and satisfaction. And the negotiation being sufficiently advanced, Mr. Hastings openly brought forward a proposition in council, October 5, 1783, to assist the mogul with a military force: and at a subsequent meeting of the board, he laid before them a letter from major Browne, dated Dehli, December 30, 1783, containing amidst much miscellaneous matter, the following extraordinary passages:—“The business of assisting the SHAH can and must now go on, if we wish to be secure  
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in India, and regarded as a nation. We have offered, the shah has accepted the offer of assistance.—We have annexed conditions, the shah has approved of them.”

The project thus unexpectedly and forcibly obtruded on the board by Mr. Hastings, was, however, very ill received by his colleagues, Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Stables, who strongly remonstrated against involving the company in new wars and dangerous foreign connections. But Mr. Hastings was not a man to be discouraged by trivial obstacles.

Early in the follow year, 1784, Mr. Hastings made a progress to the city of Lucknow, and there had an interview with the prince Mirza Jehander Sha, eldest son of the mogul, and who, as the governor general in his public letter says, “had long held the principal part in the administration of the king his father.” From Mr. Hastings’s account of this interview, which he represents as wholly unexpected and fortuitous, the prince having left the court of Dehli without even the knowledge of the emperor, it appears that urgent solicitations were made by the heir of the Mogul empire to the English governor, for aid and assistance to raise the KING, his father, from that state of degradation and insignificance into which he had fallen: intimating his readiness even to go in person to England, to represent the distresses of the emperor of Hindostan, in the hope of obtaining relief. Mr. Hastings in reply informed the prince, “that the English nation, just emerged from a state of universal warfare, required repose, and would be alarmed at any movement of which it could not immediately see the issue or the progress, but which might eventually create new hostilities; that as to himself; he could not engage, *if he chose it*, in a business of this nature, without the concurrence of his colleagues in office, who he believed would be averse to it; that he would, however, represent his situation to the joint members of his own government, and wait their

determination. In the mean time he advised him to make advances to Madajee Scindia, as the effective head of the Mahratta state, and who was in intimate union and sworn connection with the English."

In his subsequent dispatches to the council at Calcutta, Mr. Hastings requests to be invested with discretionary powers of acting in relation to the court of Dehli; under a vague promise of "not *proceeding* against their sense." The council, in reply, not only refused to grant any such powers, but exhorted him "most sedulously and cautiously to avoid, in his correspondence with the different potentates of India, whatever might commit, or be strained into an *interpretation* of committing, the company as to their army or treasure—observing, that the company's orders are positive against their interference in the objects of dispute between the *country powers*." But this injunction the sophistical subtlety of Mr. Hastings was at no loss how to evade; for, in his letter of June 1784, to the court of directors, he says, "The faction which now surrounds the THRONE, is widely different from the idea which your commands are intended to convey by the expressions to which you have generally applied them, of 'country powers,' to which that of permanency is a necessary adjunct, and which may be more properly compared to a splendid bubble, which the slightest breath of opposition may dissipate, with every trace of its existence.—That if the mogul's authority is suffered to receive its final extinction, it is impossible to foresee what power may arise out of its ruins, or what events may be linked in the same chain of revolution with it.—Your interests *may* suffer by it; your reputation certainly *will*, as his right to our assistance has been constantly acknowledged; more especially as, by the movements which the influence of our government by too near an approach has excited, it has unfortunately become the efficient instrument of a  
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great portion of the king's present distresses and dangers."

According to this most curious logic, the company's orders, not to interpose in the disputes of "the country powers," were not violated by entering into a war for the re-establishment of the authority of the mogul; *because*, the imperial crown of Hindostan being reduced to a "splendid bubble," the emperor could not now be reckoned amongst the country powers. But either recollecting or forgetting himself, he immediately offers another argument directly the reverse of the former, viz. "that the authority of the mogul, even in its present state was so considerable that, if it was suffered to be annihilated, great danger might arise to the company's interests, from the power which should be established on its ruins." And lastly he urges, "that the English company are bound in equity and justice to assist in raising the throne of the mogul to its former state of exaltation, because they have been the efficient instrument of its present distress and degradation," alluding no doubt to the deprivation of his tribute and the seizure of his demesne, "in lieu of which they were now bound *in honor* to enable him to seize upon the property of others; and his imperial majesty would no doubt, deem himself bound in return to reward his honorable allies the company, with a reasonable share of the plunder."

On the first advice of the flight of the prince from Dehli, Mr. Hastings wrote to the Mahratta chief, Madajee Scindia, to apprize him of this event, and professing *himself unprepared*, to ask his advice how to act in this emergency: and certain confidential agents from the Mahratta chief repairing to Lucknow, held frequent and secret conferences with the governor, the purport of which was never communicated to the board at Calcutta.

The whole of this tissue of cabals and intrigues terminated, however, very unexpectedly, in the sudden invasion

sion of the emperor's territories by the Mahrattas, who made themselves masters of Dehli; and the emperor being a second time prisoner in their hands, was obliged to declare the head of the Mahratta state to be vicegerent of the Mogul empire; in which capacity great and indefinite claims of superiority were advanced on the part of the peishwa, and a specific claim set up to the tribute due to the emperor from Bengal.

Far from being alarmed at this addition to the Mahratta power, Mr. Hastings declared, "that such was the attachment of Scindia to the English, that, while he lives, every accession of territory obtained by him will be an advantage to this government." Upon which it has been authoritatively remarked, "that if this were true respecting the personal disposition of Scindia, yet does it not lessen the criminality of establishing a power, which must survive the man to whom a power more than personal was given \*."

What is perhaps the most extraordinary circumstance in these extraordinary transactions, Mr. Hastings embracing the opportunity when the Mahrattas were assembled in great force upon the frontiers of the vizierate of Oude, entered into an AGREEMENT with the vizier, after seven years useless retention of them at a ruinous expence, to withdraw a very great proportion of the British troops in this moment of danger from the province; asserting, in contradiction to the whole tenor of his conduct and former declarations, "that this government has not any right to force defence with its maintenance upon the nabob." The council refusing in the present circumstances to ratify this *agreement*, Mr. Hastings moved, in his minute of December 4, 1784, "that if, contrary to his opinion, the said troops should not be reduced, they should be employ

\* Vide articles of impeachment exhibited against Wa  
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employed under the prince Mirza Jehander Shah (now notoriously under the absolute control of the Mahrattas) to assist in carrying on a war against the nation called the SEIKS, the ancient enemies of the Mahratta state; a war-like people, possessing an extensive territory to the north-west of India, on the confines of Tartary. I feel," says he, "the sense of an obligation imposed upon me, by the supposition I have made, to state a mode of rendering the detachment of use in its prescribed station, and of affording the appearance of a cause for its detention."

Mr. Hastings indeed admitted, that there was no *present danger* to the company's possessions from this remote, and almost unknown people; but he declared, "that their military and enthusiastic spirit, the hardiness of their natural constitution, the dangers which *might* arise from them in some future time, if they *should ever happen* to be united under one head, were reasons in favor of this war; and he predicted great danger from them, at no very distant period, if they be permitted to grow into maturity without interruption. Acknowledging that the urgent solicitations of the prince had their weight with him, he professed nevertheless that a stronger impulse, arising from the hope of blasting the growth of a generation whose strength *might* become fatal to our own, pleaded in his mind for supporting his wishes."

The council, unable to explore the dark and unfathomable abysses of the governor's politics, and astonished, doubtless, at an inconsistency so gross and flagrant as that of warring against a power *lest it should become formidable*, in favour of a power *already formidable*, negatived the proposition, and the peace of India was for this time happily preserved.

The governor, perceiving his influence in the council lost, knowing that his situation at home to be greatly in the hands of the court, and that a disgraceful dismissal, would be the result, was content to resign the GOVERNMENT.

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On his arrival in England he was, after a long previous investigation of his numerous delinquencies, most deservedly IMPEACHED at the bar of the house of lords, by the commons of Great Britain, of HIGH CRIMES and MISDEMEANORS in the execution of his office.

The political character of Mr. Hastings, on a cool and impartial review of his conduct, so forcibly impresses itself upon the mind, that it can derive little aid from any adventitious illustration. Daring in the conception, and ardent in the prosecution of his designs; fertile in resources, and relying with confidence and even with pride on the strength of his own genius, his character acquired a certain stamp of dignity and superiority from the inflexibility of his temper, and the apparent force of his own conviction respecting the rectitude and propriety of his measures: to which must be added, that in his public dispatches he possessed the dangerous art of giving plausibility to the most absurd and pernicious measures by artful and imposing glosses, branching out sometimes into studied ambiguities, sometimes into bold assumptions, under a perpetual external show of ingenuousness, liberality, and candor.

The numerous individuals returning in rapid succession from India, whom Mr. Hastings had engaged in his interest by various obligations, contributed also to enhance his reputation, by the high eulogiums which they almost universally bestowed upon his conduct; and in which, dazzled by the brilliant exterior of the governor's administration, and unequal to the clear comprehension of an extensive and complex system, they were probably for the most part very sincere. The truth however is, that this man, for thirteen years the scourge of the East, and whom ignorance and folly have preposterously ranked with the SULLYS and the CHATHAMS of the West, has never been, and never can become, the theme of discerning and rational panegyric. Not to speak of his total and flagrant disregard of the sole legitimate end and object of government,

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the happiness of the governed, his conduct will be found, in almost all its parts, and in the choice and prosecution of his own purposes, absurd, perplexed, capricious and inconsequent. His course was one perpetual deviation from the straight and luminous path of political and moral rectitude; and his general reputation was supported merely by his habitual vigor of mind and personal courage, which were in him intimately blended, and seemed to rise on some occasions even to the semblance of magnanimity. His exertions in the last war for the preservation of the Carnatic, which he had so wantonly and rashly endangered, were generally and justly spoken of as highly meritorious; but even in this most splendid and boasted part of his political conduct, he could challenge only the praise of a madman, who fires a house and then labors strenuously to extinguish the flames.

The administration of Mr. Hastings has been truly said, in the glowing expressions of eloquence†, “to exhibit a medley of meanness and outrage, of duplicity and deception, of prodigality and oppression, of the most callous cruelty contrasted with the hollow affectation of liberality and good faith. The sordid system of commercial policy, to which all the arrangements and regulations of the company are ultimately to be traced, was under his government carried to its utmost extent.—Thus have nations been extirpated for a sum of money, whole tracts of country laid waste to furnish an investment, princes expelled for the balance of an account, and a bloody sceptre wielded in one hand, in order to replenish the empty purse of mercantile mendicancy displayed in the other.”

The concessions of Mr. Hastings himself are indeed occasionally very large and ample; for his views seldom seem to have extended beyond the precise object which he wished at the moment to compass. The ruinous effects of British

† Vide Sheridan's speech on the begum charge, in the 14th article of impeachment.

tish perfidy and British barbarity in India, are very strongly and distinctly stated in his letters, dispatches, and minutes of council. In his minute of September 29, 1783, he says, "By a sacred and undeviating observance of every principle of public faith, the British dominion might have by this time acquired the means of its extension, through a virtual submission to its authority, to every region of Hindostan and Decan.—But the powers of India ALL dread the connection.—The subjection of Bengal, the usurpations in the Carnatic, the licentious violations of the treaty with the nizam, the effects of our connections with the vizier, stand as TERRIBLE PRECEDENTS against us." Yet as to himself, the *primum mobile* of the whole system, he declares in his famous minutes of defence, "that he had the conscious satisfaction to see all his measures terminate in their designed objects; that his political conduct was invariably regulated by truth, justice, and good faith; and that he resigned his charge in a state of established peace and security, with all the sources of its abundance unimpaired, and even improved." To reconcile these apparent incongruities, we are required therefore, by a species of faith which can work miracles, to believe that there existed in India crimes without a criminal, oppressions without an oppressor, and tyranny without a tyrant†. In fine, when we

† If it be possible yet to entertain any shadow of doubt respecting the effects of the general policy adopted by the English government in India, it must assuredly vanish when we hear the decision of lord Cornwallis, the noble successor of Mr. Hastings, who, in his dispatch of August 2, 1789, says, "Independent of all other considerations, I can assure you that it will be of the utmost importance for promoting the solid interests of the company, that the principal land-holders and traders in the interior parts of the country should be RESTORED to such circumstances as to enable them to support their families with *decency*.—I am sorry to be *obliged* to say, that agriculture and internal commerce have for many years been gradually declining; and that at present, excepting the class of Shroffs and Banians, who reside almost entirely in great towns, the inhabitants of these provinces were advancing hastily to a general state of poverty and wretchedness. In this description I must even include ALMOST EVERY ZEMINDAR in the company's territories."—And in his minute of council, dated September 18, 1789, his lordship asserts, and the assertion is surely enough to strike us with amazement and horror, "That ONE THIRD of the company's territory is now a JUNGLE inhabited by WILD BEASTS."

we consider with serious attention the origin and progress of the British government in India, the friendship and generosity with which the English nation was received and permitted to form establishments in that country, the black and base ingratitude with which those obligations were requited, and the unexampled, unprovoked, and unatoned excesses which have been perpetrated on the princes and inhabitants of Hindostan, is it the weakness of superstition merely, to tremble at the secret apprehension that some mighty vengeance is yet in store for this kingdom: and to apply to BRITAIN the sublime and terrible prophetic denunciations originally uttered against the proud, corrupt, and tyrannic states of antiquity? "Thus saith the LORD GOD—Behold I am against thee—I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.—Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of this people by the force of the sword; because thou hast said, These nations and these countries shall be mine, and we will possess them, therefore, as I live, saith the LORD GOD, I will even do according to thine anger, and according to thine envy, which thou hast used out of thine hatred against them—and thou shalt know that I am the LORD, and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume.—I have heard them; therefore, when the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make THEE desolate, and they shall know that I am the LORD."

We are now to revert from this long but necessary and important digression, to the regular narrative of events in England.

On the 18th of July 1781, the session was closed by a speech, in which his majesty observed, "that the great efforts made by the nation, to surmount the difficulties of the present arduous and complicated war, must convince the

the world that the antient spirit of the British nation was abated or diminished; and he was resolved to accept of no terms or conditions of peace, than such as might consist with the honor and dignity of his crown, and the permanent interests and security of his people."

The military history of the present year was marked, in its commencement, by a spirited though abortive attempt on the part of the French, to capture the island of Jersey by a *coup-de-main*.—Early on the 16th of January 1781, a landing was effected by the baron de Rullecourt, at the head of about 800 men, at the Bank du Violet; and, to the astonishment of the inhabitants, when the day began to dawn, the market-place of St. Helier was found occupied by French troops. The governor's house being entirely surrounded, he was compelled to surrender, himself prisoner, and was so far intimidated as even to sign articles of capitulation. But when Elizabeth-castle was summoned, captain Aylward, the commander, far from paying the least regard to the acts of the governor in his present state of durance, fired upon the French and obliged them to retreat; and major Pierfon, a young and gallant officer, second in command, having assembled the regular troops and militia of the island on the heights near the town, attacked the enemy with the greatest resolution and vigor. Baron Rullecourt being at the commencement of the action mortally wounded, the French troops in less than half an hour laid down their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Unfortunately almost the last shot fired previous to the surrender proved fatal to major Pierfon, in whose conduct, during the whole of this transaction, discretion and valor had been equally conspicuous.

Early intelligence of the rupture with Holland having been transmitted to the West Indies, admiral Rodney and general Vaughan appeared, February 1781, with a very considerable naval and military force before the island of St. Eustatia, that famous deposit of wealth and mart of traffic.

traffic. So little apprehensive were the inhabitants of this event, that it was with difficulty they were brought to give credit to the summons. Being totally destitute of the means of resistance, they were compelled to surrender at discretion. But so far were the British commanders from imitating the noble example of lenity and policy set by the marquis de Bouillé, that, with a rigor unknown and unheard-of amongst civilized nations, the immense property found on the island was declared to be confiscated on pretence of the assistance afforded by the inhabitants to the Americans, as if the inhabitants of Eustatia were amenable to the laws of Great Britain. The stores and merchandize, estimated at three millions sterling, were publicly sold for about one fourth of their real value; and the world saw with astonishment British naval and military officers, of the highest rank and reputation, degraded by a kind of harlequin metamorphosis into salesmen and auctioneers. A prodigious number of trading vessels lying in the harbor also became the property of the victors, with two men of war, one of which was a flag-ship commanded by admiral count Byland.

Nearly at the same time the Dutch settlements of Demerary, Berbicia and Iffequibo, on the Southern Main, also submitted without resistance to the arms of his Britannic majesty. Here, however, the same indiscriminate confiscation of private property did not take place. But the proceedings at St. Eustatia excited universal consternation; and a memorial was presented to admiral Rodney and general Vaughan, by the hands of Mr. Glanville, his majesty's solicitor general for St. Christopher's, strongly representing, "that if by the fate of war the British West India islands should fall into the hands of an enraged enemy, the conduct at St. Eustatia would be a pretext for them to retaliate; that the conquerors of all civilized countries had avoided the invasion of private property; that the generosity of the enemy had been very conspicuous; and

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even in the case of Grenada, which had been taken by storm, the rights of individuals had been held sacred; that Eustatia was a free port, and the rich and various commodities found there were far from being the sole property of the Dutch, that a great proportion of it belonged to British subjects; and that, previous to the declaration of war the trade to Eustatia was strictly legal, and the officers of his majesty's customs cleared out vessels from all the ports of Great Britain and Ireland for this island. And not merely the legality, but the propriety of this trade, was confirmed by the conduct of his majesty's naval officers in those seas; for if the king's enemies were supplied by the trade of his subjects through Eustatia, they were likewise supplied, through the same channel, by the sale of the prizes captured by his majesty's ships of war."—The admiral haughtily replied to Mr. Glanville, "that he had no LEISURE to peruse the memorial; but that the island of Eustatia was Dutch, every thing in it was Dutch, every thing was under the protection of the Dutch flag, and as Dutch it should be treated."

While the British arms were thus ignobly employed, the French fleet under count de Grasse, after a partial engagement with admiral Hood, who in the absence of sir George Rodney commanded the English fleet, steered its course to the island of Tobago, on which M. de Bouillé, with a considerable land force, made an immediate descent. Admiral Rodney, on receiving intelligence of this attack, detached a squadron for the relief of the island, which finding the French in great force was obliged to return; and the admiral, accompanied by general Vaughan, now sailed in person with the whole fleet for Tabago, off the coast of which he arrived the 4th of June, but had the mortification to learn that the island had surrendered on the second.

At the latter end of the year the island of Eustatia was lost in a manner not less disgraceful than that by which it had been gained. M. de Bouillé, receiving certain intelligence



ligence of the habitual negligence of the garrison, landed by night about four hundred troops, part of a much larger force which the tempestuousness of the weather had separated, in a cove at the back of the island. This spirited officer, confiding in his fortune, advanced with his troops; as soon as day-light appeared, to the citadel, which they immediately stormed, and carried with little difficulty; and the surprise being very complete, near seven hundred men, with colonel Cockbourne their commander, were, by a most humiliating necessity, constrained to surrender themselves prisoners of war. The generosity of M. de Bouillé was on this occasion, as on every other, no less conspicuous than his gallantry, forming a contrast with the conduct of the late captors, very flattering to the feelings of his countrymen. Restitution, so far as circumstances would permit, was immediately made to those unfortunate individuals who had been stripped and plundered of their property; and a declaration published, that the forces of his most christian majesty defended the island only till relieved by the troops of their high mightinesses.

On the continent of America, the war in the central colonies, though conducted by the opposing commanders in chief, seemed to languish, and affords scarcely any incident worthy of historic regard. Early in the present year it happened that the whole Pennsylvania line in the continental army, from causes of dissatisfaction not well ascertained, at once revolted; and, collecting the artillery, stores, &c. belonging to them, moved in an entire body out of the camp. General Clinton, anxious to improve to the utmost this seeming advantage, immediately passed over to Staten island with a large body of forces, and dispatched messengers to the revolted with almost unlimited offers of pay, pardon, and protection. These propositions were not only rejected with disdain, but the messengers were actually delivered up by them to congress;  
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and having obtained a promise of the redress of grievances, they soon returned to their duty.

An expedition under the conduct of general Arnold and general Philips was soon after this undertaken into Virginia, where they signalized themselves by laying waste the country, and did much damage to the Americans by the destruction of an immense quantity of provisions, merchandize, and stores deposited in different parts; and a permanent station was established at Portsmouth in order to co-operate with lord Cornwallis, whose transactions to the southward were still carried on with spirit and success. A plan having been formed between the French and American commanders, count Rochambeau and general Washington, to invest the posts occupied by general Arnold, a warm engagement took place in the month of March between admiral Arbuthnot and a French Squadron under M. Destouches, at the entrance of the Chesapeake, in which the former obtained the advantage, and was left master of the navigation of the bay: and in his dispatches to the admiralty, the naval commander writes, "The count Rochambeau must seek another opportunity of visiting Virginia—the plan of the REBEL campaign is entirely disconcerted." But the event of the campaign ill corresponded with the confidence of this prediction.

At the conclusion of the year 1780, general Gates, whose recent disasters had obliterated the memory of his former successes, was superseded in his command by general Green; a man who, in military talents, appears to have been inferior to no officer employed in the service of the American states during this war. Early in the month of January 1781, lord Cornwallis began his march to North-Carolina, general Green retiring at his approach beyond the Pedee, having previously detached colonel Morgan at the head of the light troops to the westward of the Wateree, to penetrate into South Carolina and watch the motions of the English at Wynnesborough and Camden. Lord Cornwallis,

Cornwallis, not choosing to leave so considerable a corps in his rear, ordered colonel Tarleton at the head of a superior force, and who had been hitherto uniformly successful in all his enterprises, to drive Morgan from his station.

On the 17th of January the Americans were discovered posted at a place called the Cowpens, near an open wood, and drawn up in two lines; the first of which consisted of militia only, the second of continental infantry and Virginia riflemen; and a chosen body of cavalry was posted as a *corps de reserve* at some distance in the rear. Colonel Tarleton led on the attack with his usual impetuosity; and the American militia, as colonel Morgan had foreseen, gave way on all quarters. The British then advanced, secure of victory, to the attack of the second line; and the continentals, after an obstinate conflict, retreated towards the cavalry. In the mean time the militia had formed again, agreeably to their previous orders, on the right of the continentals; and the American *corps de reserve*, perceiving the British troops disordered in the pursuit, now came forward to the attack—the militia and continentals at the same time vigorously charging with fixed bayonets. Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the British troops at these unexpected charges. The advanced corps immediately fell back, and communicated a general confusion and panic, which all the efforts of colonel Tarleton could not remedy. Such was the precipitate flight of the cavalry, that the officers, in attempting to rally their men, were overborne and carried away with the torrent; and the greatest part of the infantry, perceiving themselves abandoned, threw down their arms and begged for quarter. The cannon, colours, and baggage waggons, with more than 700 prisoners, fell into the hands of the victors. Colonel Morgan received, as he well deserved, the thanks of the congress accompanied with a gold medal for this important victory, which left his antagonist destitute of all consolation, excepting that arising from the consciousness

of his own gallant personal exertions ; and colonel Tarleton might exclaim in the language of Francis I. after the fatal defeat of Pavia, " All is lost except our honor !"

Instead of being overwhelmed with their repeated disasters, the Americans seemed to rise with fresh courage from each misfortune. The affair of Cowpens, which so soon followed the defeat of major Ferguson, might have sufficed to deter an officer less enterprising than lord Cornwallis from prosecuting his bold and hazardous projects. His lordship, who in his public dispatches styled the defeat of Tarleton an unexpected and severe blow, in the hope of recovering the prisoners captured at the Cowpens, and intercepting the victorious Americans, immediately marched with the greater part of his army by rapid movements in pursuit of colonel Morgan. That officer had crossed the Catawba a few hours only before the arrival of lord Cornwallis on its southern banks, where, by heavy rains, he was detained two or three days.

On the 1st of February, however, the passage was found practicable ; but colonel Morgan had by this time crossed the Yadkin, and effected his junction with general Green, who, on the 5th, wrote confidentially to a military correspondent, general Huger, that he was preparing to receive the enemy's attack. " It is," says he, " not improbable, from lord Cornwallis's pushing disposition and the contempt he has for our army, that he may precipitate himself into some capital misfortune." At length the whole American army, after crossing the Dan into Virginia, suddenly returned into the province of North Carolina ; and with powerful reinforcements took (March 14) a strong position near Guildford court-house. At day-break on the 15th, lord Cornwallis advanced to the attack of the Americans, who were formed in three lines ready to receive him. Through the misbehavior of the North Carolina militia, who were posted in front, the British troops soon forced their way to the second line composed of Virginians, who  
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made a much better defence, and, when at length thrown into disorder, effected a good retreat. The continental troops, who formed the third line, were last engaged; and here the contest was long and severe, but the British ultimately carried their point by superiority of numbers and discipline. The Maryland brigade being broke, an attempt was made to turn the flank of the Americans, and to surround the continental troops; on which general Green drew off the army, and left the field of battle, with the artillery consisting of four field pieces, to the enemy. The Americans retired in good order, and took post behind a river three miles only from the scene of action.

This was a victory very different from that of Camden, and dearly purchased on the part of the English by the loss of about 600 veteran troops. Instead of pursuing his advantage, his lordship found himself under the necessity, in order to procure the requisite supplies for his army, to direct his march towards Willington, situated near the mouth of Cape-Fear river, a post already occupied by a detachment of British troops, where he arrived on the 7th of April.

General Green, perceiving lord Cornwallis reduced to a state of reluctant inaction, immediately, by a bold and decisive manœuvre, directed his march to the southward, and unexpectedly attacked the important post of Camden. This was gallantly maintained by lord Rawdon; but the surrounding stations of Fort-Motte, Orangeburg, Congarees, and Augusta, being successively forced, his lordship was compelled to evacuate Camden, and retire to the south of the Santee. General Green then laid close siege to the town or township of Ninety-six, which was considered as commanding the whole of the back country; and on the approach of lord Rawdon, who had recently received great reinforcements from England, attempted to storm the garrison; but was repulsed with loss, and retired with his army behind the Saluda. Being advised by divers of

his officers, on this misfortune, to retreat back to Virginia, he replied with true military enthusiasm, "I will recover the country, or die in the attempt." Thus, in situations where feeble minds droop and languish, the ardor of genius burns with redoubled lustre. No sooner was the British army divided and weakened by the several detachments necessary to occupy their former posts, than general Green again crossed the Saluda in force. Lord Rawdon, surprised and unprepared for action, retired to Orangeburg; and the important post of Ninety-six, so gallantly defended by colonel Cruger, was now evacuated. The garrison joining lord Rawdon, with other troops drawn from the advanced posts, general Green took a strong position on the high hills of Santee, whence he detached different parties to intercept the convoys and beat up the quarters of the English between Orangeburg and Charlestown.

The British now under the command of colonel Stuart having advanced to the point of junction between the Wateree and Congaree, in order to cover the country to the south and south-east of those rivers, general Green passed the Congaree with a view to inclose the British army in its present insulated situation, or compel them to retreat towards Charlestown. Colonel Stuart immediately fell back forty miles, to a place called Eutaw Springs, where he took an advantageous position, his right extending to the Eutaw, and his left to a rising ground which was occupied by a *corps de reserve*. General Green, with the American army, advanced, September 8, 1781, to the attack with the greatest resolution. The Virginian and Maryland continentals charged the left wing of the British with trailed arms through a heavy cannonade and shower of musquetry, and bore down all before them. The American cavalry, at the same time, turned the left flank of the British, and attacked them in the rear. The whole army gave way in great confusion; but in their retreat, gaining an open field, they

they were, with much address, rallied by colonel Stuart, and formed again under protection of an effective and well-directed fire from a large and moated house which served them in the stead of a redoubt; and from whence the Americans, after repeated efforts, were not able to dislodge them. And the right wing of the British pressing on the left flank of the Americans, general Green thought proper to order a retreat, leaving four pieces of artillery in the hands of the British, two of which had been taken by the Americans in the early part of the engagement. The English were in no condition to pursue, and general Green carried off with him all his wounded and several hundred prisoners. Also about five hundred men were killed and wounded on the part of the British, by the account of colonel Stuart, in this well-contested battle, in which the officers on each side fought hand to hand, and sword to sword. The loss of the Americans in all these respects was much inferior; but as colonel Stuart was left in possession of the field and several pieces of cannon, he claimed, agreeably to military etiquette, the honor of the victory;—but he might well exclaim with the monarch of Epirus, “Such another victory, and I am undone!”

In the evening of the next day, he abandoned the Eutaw and moved towards Charlestown, after destroying a great part of his stores; leaving behind him many of his wounded, and about a thousand stand of arms. This engagement was decisive of the fate of the war in the southern colonies—the British not being able from this time to appear in the open field, and scarcely could they maintain their posts in the vicinity of Charlestown and Savannah; and in the course of the next year those towns were finally evacuated.

Lord Cornwallis, to whose operations it is now necessary to revert, on the march of general Green's army to the southward, found himself reduced to a perplexing dilemma—either to abandon the Carolinas to their fate, or sacrifice

crifice his hopes of future conquests, and entirely disappoint the high and sanguine expectations, which he knew to be formed in England, of the result of the present campaign. His pride at length overbalancing his prudence, he determined to prosecute his march to Virginia.

The Roanoke, the Meherrin, and the Nottaway rivers were successively crossed by the British army with trifling opposition, and on the 20th of May his lordship arrived at Petersburg, where he was joined by the powerful detachment recently conducted thither by generals Arnold and Philips. The force under his lordship's command was now very formidable; and the marquis de la Fayette, who was at the head of the troops collected for the defence of the province, was compelled to keep a guarded distance, and conducted himself with so much judgment, that no considerable advantage could be obtained against him. From Petersburg lord Cornwallis advanced to James River, which he crossed at West Town; and thence marching through Hanover County, crossed the South Anna or Pamunky River, whence, by a rapid movement, colonel Tarleton had nearly surprised the assembly of Virginia now sitting at Charlotte-vill.

Various expeditions were undertaken to different parts of the province with uniform success; and lord Cornwallis, by a well-concerted manœuvre, having taken a position between the American army and its grand *dépôt* of stores at Albemarle court-house, could not avoid exulting in his superiority. Knowing that the marquis de la Fayette was on his march to prevent that important capture, and believing that he could not make his approach but with great disadvantage and hazard, he in an unguarded moment exclaimed, "The boy cannot escape me!" But the marquis had the address to extricate himself from this difficulty, by opening in the night a nearer and long disused road to the court-house: and the next day, to the surprise of lord Cornwallis,



Cornwallis, he had taken a position which effectually covered it from attack.

Lord Cornwallis, finding his plan frustrated, proceeded to Williamsburg, the capital of the province, which he took possession of, June 26th, without opposition. Here he received advices from sir Henry Clinton, which informed him that the commander in chief, conceiving New York to be in danger from the united forces of the French and Americans, desired the troops under general ~~Clinton~~, which he had detached to Virginia, to be returned. This was the beginning of disasters. With this requisition lord Cornwallis was compelled, however reluctantly, to comply. Knowing that his adversary had been lately reinforced by a strong body of troops under general Wayne, he did not think his present force adequate to maintain his station at Williamsburg; he therefore determined to cross James River to Portsmouth.

From false intelligence general Wayne arrived with the van of the American army on the banks of the river, in expectation of attacking the rear of the British, unfortunately before any part of the army had passed. Perceiving his mistake, he deemed it the best policy to charge boldly, though his corps did not amount to more than eight hundred men. After sustaining a very unequal conflict for some time with great resolution, Wayne ordered a rapid retreat; and lord Cornwallis, amazed at the circumstances of this attack, and suspecting that it must be meant to draw him into an ambuscade, forbade all pursuit; and thus the courage of Wayne, as it often happens, availed more to his safety than if he had acted with the most timid and scrupulous caution. In the night lord Cornwallis passed over to Portsmouth, where he purposed to establish his head-quarters; but, on farther deliberation, removed to York-town, as the more eligible situation.

Hitherto the plan of the campaign on the part of general Washington had wavered in uncertainty. He had long  
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and seriously meditated an attack upon New York, and general Clinton had good reason to believe that this was finally determined upon at an interview between the American general and count Rochambeau, which took place in May; and in consequence of this project, great preparations were made in the vicinity of New York, indicatory of an approaching siege. But the arrival of considerable reinforcements from England, and the recall of so large a body of troops from Virginia, led general Washington, in his dispatch of July 30th, to observe, "that from this change of circumstances, they should probably entirely change their plan of operations."

At length a letter from count de Grasse, stating that his destination was unalterably fixed to the Chesapeak, left no alternative; and a joint answer was immediately sent by the American and French generals, that they would lose no time in removing the army to the south of the Delaware, there to meet the admiral. All the appearances of an attack upon New York were, however, still carefully kept up, till at length, on the 24th of August, the allied army suddenly decamped, passed the North River, and by rapid marches proceeded to Philadelphia, where they arrived on the 30th; the fleet of count de Grasse, consisting of twenty-four ships of the line, entering nearly at the same time the bay of Chesapeak.

So strongly impressed was the mind of the British commander in chief with the notion of an attack upon New York, that he for a long time conceived the southern march of the American army to be only a feint. But at length, finding that the van of the American army had actually passed the Delaware, and receiving authentic intelligence that the fleet of count de Grasse was destined to the Chesapeak, he communicated, as he tells us, his suspicions to lord Cornwallis, at the same time assuring his lordship, "that he would either reinforce him by every possible

possible means in his power, or make the best diversion he could in his favor."

Doubtless, in this critical situation, the most unlimited discretion ought to have been vested in lord Cornwallis, considering the extreme uncertainty of affording him timely and effectual succor, either to have retreated to Carolina, or to have attacked the enemy previous to the arrival of the combined army. "But being assured," to use the words of lord Cornwallis, "that every possible means would be tried by the navy and army for his relief, he did not think himself *at liberty* to attempt either, though he had so unfavourable an opinion of the post he occupied, that nothing but these assurances would have induced him to attempt its defence."

It is evident that the leading ideas of the two British generals did not coincide; and it may be remarked, that from the moment lord Cornwallis began to act in subordination to orders sent him from New York, he ceased to be successful—So essential is it that the supreme command should reside in the centre of action. The commander in chief was at this period no more than the governor of a distant garrison; but had sir Henry Clinton joined lord Cornwallis in person at his entrance into Virginia, or had the supreme command been then transferred to lord Cornwallis, the campaign, so far as we are authorised to draw a conclusion from concurring probabilities, would not have terminated so disastrously.

On the 5th of September the English fleet, consisting of nineteen ships of the line, under admiral Graves, appeared off the Capes of Virginia; and count de Grasse, expecting a reinforcement from Rhode Island, stood out to sea for their protection. A warm engagement ensued, in which the English appear *not* to have obtained the advantage; and the count de Grasse, being joined by the squadron of M. Barras, was left undisputed master of the Chesapeake. Relief was from this time wholly impracticable; and lord  
Cornwallis

Cornwallis withdrew within his works, making every preparation for a vigorous defence. The military talents of this commander, though of no mean rate, were nevertheless unequal to so novel and perilous an exigency.

On the 17th of September the sagacity of general Green pronounced, in writing to his military friend and correspondent, baron Steuben, " Nothing can save lord Cornwallis but a rapid retreat through North Carolina to Charlestown." But his lordship still lingered, and still indulged eager and fruitless hopes of success. York-town being situated nearly at the extremity of a narrow peninsula, inclosed between York-river to the north and James-river to the south, it was invested with great ease and advantage by an enemy who commanded the navigation of the two rivers.

On the 14th of October the besiegers, notwithstanding the well-directed and incessant fire of the enemy, had advanced far in their second parallel. Being greatly incommoded in their approaches by two redoubts at the distance of two hundred yards from the British lines, it was determined to attack them at the same time by different detachments of French and Americans. Actuated by the spirit of emulation, both redoubts were carried sword in hand with resistless impetuosity. On marching to the assault, the general exclamation was, " Remember New London!" a place on the coast of Connecticut, which the renegade Arnold, in one of his predatory expeditions, had recently taken and destroyed, putting the troops which defended it to the sword. On the submission, nevertheless, of the British stationed in the two redoubts, their lives were spared: and when the Americans were afterwards interrogated why they did not carry their previous resolve into execution, they replied, " they could not tell how to put men to death while begging on their knees for quarter." By this time the batteries of the besiegers were covered with one hundred pieces of heavy ordnance; and the British

tish works, enfiladed in almost every part, and nearly demolished, could scarcely mount a single gun. In this extremity no other resource remained than to endeavour to transport the garrison across York-river to Gloucester-point, opposite to York-town, where works had been also erected, and were still occupied by part of the British army. But this intention being totally frustrated by a violent storm after the embarkation had actually commenced, lord Cornwallis was reduced to the hard and terrible necessity of proposing terms of capitulation, which were granted only on condition of his lordship's surrendering himself, and the forces under his command, to the amount of above 7000 men, prisoners of war. The honor of marching out with colors flying, which had been refused to general Lincoln on his giving up Charlestown, was now refused to lord Cornwallis; and general Lincoln was appointed to receive the submission of the army of York-town, precisely in the same way his own had been conducted eighteen months before.

Such was the final issue of the eager hopes and sanguine expectations excited by the first brilliant successes of this noble and gallant commander. The joy of the Americans on the capture of a second royal army was unbounded. In a circuitous march of 1100 miles, from Charlestown to Williamsburg, every place through which they passed experienced the effects of their rapacity: and instead of endeavouring to conciliate the minds of the inhabitants by acts of lenity, they alienated even those who were most friendly, by their relentless and systematic severity. Yet was lord Cornwallis, as an individual, generous, disinterested, and humane; but the favorite and avowed maxim of the British government at this time, a maxim from which the military commanders seem not to have thought themselves at liberty to depart, was, "that the extreme of rigor, by making the war intolerable, and resistance hopeless, was in effect the greatest mercy, and the mode of  
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all others to be adopted, therefore, by the *parental affection of Britain* for reclaiming his majesty's *deluded subjects of America.*" A marble column, with a suitable inscription and trophies, was ordered by the congress to be erected at York-town, in commemoration of this glorious and decisive event; and a solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God was appointed throughout all the states of the union, "for the signal successes with which he had vouchsafed to bless the armies of America, combating in defence of their rights and liberties."

The remaining miscellaneous transactions of the year must now be succinctly noticed.

Early in the spring governor Johnstone, late one of the commissioners to America, was invested with a naval command, and with a considerable squadron was detached on an expedition to the Cape of Good Hope. The court of Versailles, knowing the present inability of the states general to protect their foreign dominions, sent a superior squadron under M. Suffrein to counteract the designs of the English; and coming up with them at Port Praya, in the island of St. Jago, the French admiral scrupled not to violate the neutrality of the Portuguese flag, by attacking the squadron of commodore Johnstone while it lay dispersed and scattered, unsuspecting of danger, in the harbor. Happily the French, rather by extraordinary efforts of valor on the part of the British seamen, than of skill on that of their commander, were beaten off; but immediately proceeding to the Cape, they effectually secured that important settlement from any hostile attempt. Commodore Johnstone, on his subsequent and tardy arrival, was obliged to content himself with the capture of several Dutch East Indiamen in Saldanha bay; and those of his ships which were destined for the East Indies prosecuting their voyage thither, the commodore returned home with his prizes, from his inglorious though lucrative expedition.

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In the course of the summer an engagement took place off the Dogger bank, between an English squadron commanded by admiral Hyde Parker, and a Dutch squadron of equal force under admiral Zoutman, who had under convoy the Baltic trade bound to the Texel. On perceiving the English fleet bearing down, the Dutch admiral, who was to leeward, lay-to, and the English were suffered to approach within half musquet shot without firing a gun, when a dreadful cannonade commenced, which was kept up without interruption for three hours and forty minutes; and the action then ceased only because the ships on both sides, from the damages they had respectively sustained, were no longer found manageable. The Dutch, after some time, bore away with their convoy for the Texel, which they reached with great difficulty, one of their largest ships sinking before they could make the harbor.

Admiral Parker, who had unavailingly applied to the admiralty for a reinforcement, returned in great discontent and in a shattered condition to the Nore, where he received the signal honor of a visit from his majesty on board his own ship, and was offered *knighthood* as the reward of his valor. But his haughty refusal shewed how little he was flattered by these petty and puerile distinctions.

The Dutch on their part bestowed rewards more liberal and solid on the officers and sailors of their fleet, and admiral Zoutman was received at Amsterdam with great applause and acclamation: and the event of this remarkable action shewed, that the Dutch seamen were still possessed of that determined courage which had distinguished them in the days of De Ruyter and Van Tromp.

About this time the emperor, now resident in the Netherlands, issued a placart, by which Ostend was declared to be a free port; and in the month of October he acceded in form to the armed neutrality, as the kings of Prussia and Portugal had also previously done.

Notwithstanding

Notwithstanding the great concessions made by the parliament of Great Britain to the people of Ireland, that country, finding its own strength, remained in a state far short of satisfaction; for it had still much to ask, or rather to demand. The army on the Irish establishment had been hitherto invariably governed and directed by the sole prerogative of the monarch; but as the spirit of liberty and independence increased, a mutiny bill, on the model of the English, had been recently introduced into the Irish parliament, and passed into a perpetual law. But a measure originally highly popular was now the subject of loud complaint; and it was affirmed, not without reason, that liberty could never be secured on just and constitutional grounds, so long as the monarch was irrevocably invested with the unlimited power of the sword; that in England the mutiny bill was passed only from year to year, and in the very preamble of it, standing armies without consent of parliament are declared illegal; the troops themselves, the law that regulated, and the power that commands them, are by this bill limited to one year. Thus was the army of England rendered a parliamentary army, and the constitutional ascendancy of the subject over the soldier preserved.

In numerous county and provincial meetings the supremacy of the British parliament was in formal resolves positively denied, and the absolute independence of Ireland on the British legislature boldly asserted. The unconstitutional powers of the Irish privy council, where, agreeably to the famous law of Poyning, all laws must originate, were reprobated, a habeas corpus act loudly called for, the abolition of all superfluous places and pensions insisted upon. The zeal and activity of the military associations sufficiently evinced their determination to enforce their claims by a mode of application which was in no danger of being disregarded.

SUCH



SUCH was the state of things when the second session of the present parliament commenced at Westminster, on the 27th of November 1781. In the speech from the throne his majesty observed, “ that the war was still unhappily prolonged, and that, to his great concern, the events of it had been very unfortunate to his army in Virginia, having ended in the total loss of his forces in that province. But he could not consent to sacrifice, either to his own desire of peace or to the temporary ease and relief of his subjects, those essential rights and permanent interests upon which the strength and security of this country must ever principally depend.” His majesty declared, “ that he retained a firm confidence in the protection of divine providence, and a PERFECT CONVICTION of the JUSTICE of his CAUSE ;”—and he concluded by calling “ for the concurrence and support of parliament, and a VIGOROUS, ANIMATED, and UNITED EXERTION of the FACULTIES and RESOURCES of his PEOPLE.” Upon the whole, this speech was plainly indicative of a fixed and resolute determination to prosecute a war, of which it might well be supposed, that “ fools as gross as ignorance made drunk” might by this time have seen the hopelessness and the absurdity.

The monarch had now swayed the sceptre of these kingdoms more than twenty years, and, in the course of a long and variegated series of events, his character both personal and political was completely matured and developed.

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to reverse the medal, a view of the private life and domestic habits of the king will indeed discover a life passed without any remarkable deviation from the rules of propriety and decorum, and much less any direct violation of the higher and more serious obligations of morality and religion. But the virtues of the man, were they such as to entitle him to the honors of papal canonization, unfortunately afford to the public a most inadequate and wretched compensation for the errors and imperfections of the monarch.

The speech from the throne underwent, as may well be imagined, the severest animadversion.—Mr. Fox said he had expected, and he knew it had been expected by many others, to hear on this occasion his majesty declare from the throne, that he had been deceived and imposed upon by misinformation and misrepresentation; that, in consequence of his delusion, the parliament had been deluded, but that now the deception was at an end; and requesting of his parliament to devise the most speedy and efficacious means of putting an end to the public calamities: instead of which, they had heard a speech breathing little else than vengeance, misery, and blood. Those who *were ignorant of the personal character of the sovereign*, and who imagined this speech to originate with him, might be led to suppose that he was an unfeeling despot, rejoicing in the horrid sacrifice of the liberty and lives of his subjects, who, when all hope of victory was vanished, still thirsted for revenge. The ministers who advised this speech he affirmed to be a CURSE to the country, over the affairs of which they had too long been suffered to preside. From that unrivalled pre-eminence which we so lately possessed, they had made us the object of ridicule and scorn to the surrounding nations. “But,” said he, “the time will surely come when an oppressed and irritated people will firmly call for SIGNAL PUNISHMENT on those whose counsels have brought the nation so near to the brink of destruction. An indignant nation will surely

surely in the end compel them to make some faint atonement, for the magnitude of their offences, on a PUBLIC SCAFFOLD." He concluded with moving, "That of the address proposed the whole be omitted excepting the first paragraph, and the following words inserted:—"And we will without delay apply ourselves with united hearts to propose and digest such counsels as may in this crisis excite the efforts, point the arms, and, by a total change of system, command the confidence of all his majesty's subjects."

This amendment was vigorously supported by Mr. Pitt, who declared, "that the duty he owed his sovereign and his country compelled him to exert every effort to prevent the house from precipitately voting an address, which pledged them to the support of that fatal system which had led this country, step by step, to the most calamitous and disgraceful situation to which a once flourishing and glorious empire could be reduced.—Was it becoming the parliament of a free people to echo back the words which a minister, long practised in the arts of delusion, had dared to put into the royal mouth? He implored the house not to vote for an address fraught with treachery and falsehood, which could not have been framed by any who felt for the honor of the king, the dignity of parliament, or the interest of the nation."

An amendment of the same import was moved in the upper house by the earl of Shelburne, and supported by the duke of Richmond, who declared "the misfortunes of this country to be owing to that wretched system of government which had been early adopted in the reign of his present majesty, and to the influence of that INTERIOR CABINET which (he said) had been the ruin of this country;" and he recalled to the recollection of the house the memorable declaration of the late earl of Chatham, "that he was duped and deceived, and that he had not been ten days in the cabinet before he felt the ground rotten under his feet."

In both houses, however, the addresses were carried by great majorities, and a most melancholy and alarming prospect presented itself to the nation, of a fatal perseverance in a war which, from an involuntary and irresistible conviction universally impressed, was now regarded as desperate, and passionately deprecated as tending to certain and remediless ruin.

In a very few days, a motion being made by Sir Grey Cooper for the house to resolve itself into a committee of supply, a vehement debate arose. Mr. Fox in the course of a most animated speech, asked "if ministers would give any satisfactory assurance to the house, that the military forces which should hereafter be sent across the Atlantic, would be employed more successfully or honorably than those which had already been sent thither? Did the American secretary wish to dispatch a third army to America, that general Washington might a third time receive them as prisoners of war? Did he wish that more British troops should be devoted to slaughter, captivity and disgrace? Notwithstanding the defeat and dishonor which had attended the measures of administration, they had yet discovered no signs of humiliation or penitence. Instead of acknowledging that they turned their eyes with inquietude and shame upon the criminal expenditure of fruitless millions, they did not blush to move for an increase of grants, that they might prosecute, till ruin should have stopped their infamous career, hostilities which were the result of barbarous ambition, of implacable malevolence, of a detestation of liberty, of a contempt for every principle of justice, equity, and honor."

The ministers were so vigorously pushed in this debate, and seemed so utterly incapable of defending themselves or their measures, that it was probably a welcome surprise to them, to find in their favor, on the division, 172 voices to 77.

It

It being understood that preparations were making for another embarkation of troops from Ireland to America, a very important motion was on the 12th of December made by sir James Lowther, "that it be resolved by the house, that the war carried on against the colonies and plantations of North America had been ineffectual to the purposes for which it was undertaken; and that it was also the opinion of this house, that all farther attempts to reduce the Americans to obedience by force, must be injurious to this country, by weakening her powers to resist her antient and confederated enemies." In support of this motion, which was indeed the plain dictate of common sense, the mover observed, "that the late speech from the throne had given a just alarm to the nation—it had shewn them that the ministers were determined to persevere in the American war—that more blood and more money were to be lavished in this fatal contest; the men invested with the powers of government derived no advantage from experience—the surrender of one army only gave them spirit to risque a second, and the surrender of the second only instigated them to venture a third. There was no end of loss nor of madness. The unexampled ignorance and misconduct of the ministry were now visible to all the world! It was therefore become the indispensable duty of that house to come to some solemn resolution, in order to mark and define their idea of the American war, and to convince their constituents that they were awake to the real situation of the country."

The motion was seconded by Mr. Powys, member for Northamptonshire, who acknowledged "that a variety of pretexts insidiously advanced by the ministers, and too credulously received by the majority of that house, had seduced them, from one session to another, to move with fatal steps along the path to national destruction. The war with the colonies was the idol of his majesty's ministers; they had bowed before it themselves, and had made

the nation bow. The conduct which at the commencement of hostilities might be denominated firmness, had now degenerated into obstinacy; an obstinacy which called upon all honest and independent men to desert the present administration, unless a change of measures were adopted. That men who were indebted to war for their emoluments, power, and influence, should persevere in such iniquitous and selfish measures, was not extraordinary; but it was a just cause for wonder that they should be supported by individuals of independent principles and independent fortunes. The insidious pretence of revenue was grown too stale for imposition. The American war had been a war of delusion from beginning to end. Every promise had been broken, every assertion had been falsified, every object relinquished. It was now a war of this sort, then a war of that sort; now a war of revenue, then a war of supremacy; now a war of coercion, and then a war of friendship and affection for America: but it was time to put an end to these chicaneries. Whatever might be the nature of the war, no prospect of success in it remained. He therefore not only gave the motion his full concurrence, but he should feel the highest pleasure if it received the general approbation of the house."

This speech bore a very ominous aspect with relation to the ministers; for, Mr. Powys being himself a principal leader of the independent interest, or *country gentlemen*, in the house, there was reason to apprehend the speedy and general defection of that high and haughty class of members: and a mere ministerial majority of placemen and pensioners, it is superfluous to say, affords only a rotten and treacherous support, whenever a surmise prevails that support is really wanted.

In the course of the debate general Burgoyne acknowledged "that he was now convinced the *principle* of the American war was wrong, though he had not been of  
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that opinion when he engaged in the service. Passion and prejudice and interest were now no more, and reason and observation had led him to a very different conclusion: and he now saw that the American war was only one part of a system levelled against the constitution of this country, and the general rights of mankind."

Notwithstanding the utmost opposition of the minister, the numbers, on dividing the house, appeared to be 179 in favor of the motion, against 220 who opposed it. This was a majority in which the ministry had little reason to exult. It afresh excited the most sanguine hopes of the public, who, with the exception of the high tory and prerogative faction, were now perfectly unanimous in their reprobation of the war and its authors.

On the 14th of December, two days only after the motion of sir James Lowther, the army estimates were laid before the house by the secretary at war, from which it appeared that the whole military force required for the year 1782, including, the provincial corps serving in America, amounted to 195,000 men. One hundred thousand seamen and marines had been already voted by the house. It was however stated by lord George Germaine, "that the ministry were of opinion, considering the present situation of affairs, and the misfortunes of the war, that it would not be right to continue any longer the plan on which it had hitherto been conducted; and that a fresh army would not be sent to supply the place of that captured at York town. It was intended only to preserve such posts in America, as might facilitate and co-operate with the enterprises of our fleets."

"In the debate which ensued, sir George Saville particularly distinguished himself. "At length, then," said this firm and faithful patriot, "we are given to understand that a change is to be made in the mode of conducting the American war. The ministers do not intend to prosecute it in the same manner as before.—Why? Because they could

could not if they would. But it appeared that they were determined to prosecute it with all the feeble efforts of which they were yet capable. Being detained in the country by ill health, he had not heard the king's speech on it's first delivery; but when it reached him in his retirement, he had read it with HORROR, announcing as it did the continuance of the present war in its most destructive form. As to the address of that house, in answer to the speech, it was a mere echo without meaning, a futile and empty sound. So servile was the dependence of that house on the executive power, and so little solicitous were they to conceal their dependence, that if the king's speech had contained the line, 'What beauties does Flora disclose!' he doubted not but the address would have filled up the couplet by repeating, 'How sweet are her smiles upon Tweed!' The ministers had lost the two hands of the empire in the prosecution of this frantic and ineffectual war; by a continuance of it they would risque the head. Such a conduct resembled, if it did not indicate, the violence of insanity. Could the house so far forget their dignity, and relinquish their understanding, as not to resist this madness? Would they intrust lunatics with the management of the public purse? Would they place the sword within their hands, and bid them use it at their DISCRETION?"

General Conway declared himself "anxious for a recall of our fleets and armies from America. Of two evils he would choose the least, and submit to the independence of America, rather than persist in the prosecution of so pernicious and ruinous a war. As to the idea now suggested of a war of posts, what garrisons, he asked, would be able to maintain them, when it was well known that even sir Henry Clinton, at New York, did not consider himself as secure?"

Mr. Fox remarked, "that four years ago, after the disaster of Saratoga, the noble lord at the head of affairs  
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had amused the house with the same language. Then the plan of future hostilities was to be differently modified, and the war conducted on a smaller and more contracted scale. On this contracted scale, however, we had lost another great army, besides suffering other grievous defeats, and irretrievable calamities."

Mr. Pitt reprobated with the utmost force of language, "as a species of obstinacy bordering upon madness, the idea of any further prosecution of the American war with our fleets opposed by a superior force, and our armies in captivity. He appealed to the whole house, whether every description of men did not detest and execrate the American war, and whether it were uncharitable to implore the Almighty to shower down his vengeance on the men who were the authors of their country's ruin?"

The impression made by the successive speeches of the principal leaders of opposition in this debate, was too great to be concealed; but the estimates, as originally moved, were at length voted by a considerable majority.

Nearly at this time a petition was presented by the city of London to the king, in which the calamities resulting from the war are stated in terms peculiarly impressive and eloquent. In conclusion they say, "we beseech your majesty no longer to continue in a delusion from which the nation has awakened, and that your majesty will be graciously pleased to relinquish entirely and for ever the plan of reducing our brethren in America by force. And we do further humbly implore your majesty, that your majesty will be graciously pleased to dismiss from your presence and councils all the advisers, *both public and secret*, of the measures we lament, as a pledge to the world of your majesty's fixed determination to abandon a system incompatible with the interest of the crown and the happiness of your people."

Soon after the recess of parliament, Mr. Fox renewed his former motion of censure against the first lord of the admiralty;

admiralty; and such strength had the opposition now acquired, that in a house of near four hundred members, it was rejected by a majority of only twenty-two. The unpopularity of the American secretary was so great and manifest, that he now thought it expedient, seeing parliamentary censures likely to become again in fashion, to resign the seals of that department, and for his *eminent services* he was by his majesty raised to the dignity of the peerage. But before the great seal was affixed to the patent, the marquis of Carmarthen moved in the house of peers, "that it was highly derogatory to the honor of that house, that any person laboring under the sentence of a court martial, styled in the public orders issued by his late majesty 'a censure much worse than death,' and adjudged unfit to serve his majesty in any military capacity, should be recommended to the crown as a proper person to sit in that house."

The motion was evaded by the question of adjournment; but lord George Germaine having actually taken his seat in the house under the title of lord viscount Sackville, the marquis of Carmarthen renewed his attack, and urged, "that the house of peers being a court of honor, it behoved them to preserve that honor uncontaminated, and to mark in the most forcible manner their disapprobation of the introduction of a person into that assembly who was stigmatized in the orderly books of every regiment in the service."

Lord Abingdon, who seconded the motion, styled the admission of lord George Germaine to a peerage "an insufferable indignity to that house, and an outrageous insult to the public.—What (said his lordship) has that person done to merit honors superior to his fellow-citizens? His only claim to promotion was, that he had undone his country by executing the plan of that accursed invisible, though efficient cabinet, from whom as he received his orders, so he had obtained his reward."

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Lord Sackville, in his own vindication, denied the justice of the sentence passed upon him, and affirmed "that he considered his restoration to the council board, at a very early period of the present reign, as amounting to a virtual repeal of that iniquitous verdict."

The duke of Richmond strongly defended the motion, and said "that he himself was present at the battle of Minden, and was summoned on the trial of lord George Germaine; and had his deposition been called for, he could have proved that the time lost when the noble viscount delayed to advance, under pretence of receiving contradictory orders, was not less than *one hour and a half*; that the cavalry were a mile and a quarter only from the scene of action; and it was certainly in his lordship's power, therefore, to have rendered the victory, important as it was, far more brilliant and decisive; and he had little reason to complain of the severity of the sentence passed upon him."

Lord Southampton also, who, as aid-de-camp to prince Ferdinand on that memorable day, delivered the message of his serene highness to his lordship, vindicated the equity of the sentence.

The motion was likewise powerfully supported by the earl of Shelburne, the marquis of Rockingham, and other distinguished peers.

On the division, nevertheless, it was rejected by a majority of ninety-three to twenty-eight voices: but to the inexpressible chagrin of lord Sackville, a protest was entered on the journals of the house, declaring the promotion of his lordship to be "a measure fatal to the interests of the crown, insulting to the memory of the late sovereign, and highly derogatory to the dignity of that house."

Mr. Fox, on the 20th of February 1782, again brought forward his motion of censure, somewhat varied, on lord Sandwich, which was negatived by a majority of nineteen voices

voices only, in a house consisting of 453 members; but to the astonishment of the nation, the noble lord still daringly kept possession of his office, although 217 members of the house of commons had pronounced him "guilty of a shameful mismanagement of the naval affairs of Great Britain." The opposition appearing every day to gain strength in the house of commons, the downfall of the ministry began at length to be confidently predicted.

On the 22d of February, general Conway moved "for an address to the king, earnestly imploring his majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to listen to the humble prayer and advice of his faithful commons, that the war on the continent of North America might no longer be pursued, for the impracticable purpose of reducing that country to obedience by force." This was opposed in a long speech by Mr. Welbore Ellis, the new secretary for the American department, who declared, "that it was now in contemplation to contract the scale of the war, and to prosecute hostilities by such means as were very dissimilar from the past. That *unhappy faction* in America which still continued its resistance to the government of this kingdom, though *less numerous than the party of the royalists*, could only be *rooted out* by pushing the war with vigor against France. In order to obtain peace with America we must vanquish the French; and as in the late war, America had been said to be conquered in Germany, so in this America must be conquered in France. In present circumstances, the administration were conscious of the necessity of drawing into a narrow compass the operations of the American war, a change of circumstances demanding a correspondent change of measures." 'That this miserable mixture of falsehood and folly should fail to make impression upon the house, cannot be deemed wonderful, and the ministry themselves seemed to despair of their cause, when they committed the defence of  
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it to so contemptible an advocate;—whom Mr. Burke, in reply, overwhelmed with the supercilious and poignant disdain of his ridicule. “This war,” Mr. Burke said, had “been most amazingly fertile in the growth of new statesmen; the right honorable gentleman was indeed an old member, but a young secretary. Having however studied at the feet of Gamaliel, he had entered into full possession of all the parliamentary qualifications, by which his predecessor had been so conspicuously distinguished;—the same attachments, the same antipathies, the same extravagant delusion, the same wild phantoms of the brain, marked the right honorable gentleman as the true ministerial heir and residuary legatee of the noble viscount. And notwithstanding the metamorphosis he had recently undergone, he was so truly the same thing in the same place, that justly might it be said of him, ‘*alter et idem nascitur.*’ Being of the caterpillar species, he had remained the destined time within the soft and silken folds of a lucrative employment, till having burst his ligaments he fluttered forth the butterfly minister of the day.” On the division, however the ministry had still a *majority*, but a fearful majority of ONE voice only! the numbers being 192 for, and 193 against the motion; so that the pyramidal edifice of ministerial power seemed now, by a marvellous and magical inversion, to rest upon its apex.

Mr. Fox immediately gave notice, that in a few days the question would be revived under another form. Accordingly, on the 27th of February, general Conway moved, that it is the opinion of this house, that a farther prosecution of offensive war against America would, under present circumstances, be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her European enemies, and tend to increase the mutual enmity so fatal to the interests both of Great Britain and America.” The general spoke with indignation of the objection urged against the last motion, that it was an unconstitutional interference

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in matters pertaining to the executive power. He said, it had been ever the custom of that house to interpose its advice whenever it thought proper, in all matters of peace and war, as their journals incontrovertibly proved.

In order to evade an immediate determination upon the question, the attorney-general Wallace moved, "that a bill should be prepared, enabling his majesty to conclude a truce with America, and to enter into a negotiation on this ground." This proposition was negatived by a majority of 19, the numbers being 234 to 215; and the original motion of general Conway was then carried without a division.

The general next moved an address to the king, founded on the precise words of the motion. This was agreed to, and it was resolved, that the address should be presented to his majesty by the whole house; which was accordingly done on the 1st of March: and his majesty most graciously replied, "that in pursuance of the advice of the house of commons, he would assuredly take such measures as should appear to him most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and her *revolted* colonies."

This not being deemed by the now glorious majority of the house sufficiently explicit, general Conway on the 4th of March moved another address to his majesty, returning him thanks for his gracious assurances, and affirming, "That nothing could so essentially promote the great objects of his majesty's paternal care, as the measures his faithful commons had humbly, though earnestly, recommended to his majesty." This was agreed to NEM. CON. and by a second motion it was resolved, "That the house will consider as enemies to his majesty and the country, all those who should advise a prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North America." The glory of general Conway, who had sixteen years before restored peace to  
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the empire by his motion for the repeal of the stamp act, was now complete.

The minister giving notice of his intention to postpone for some days laying before the house the additional taxes, which were to pay the interest of the new loan of thirteen millions and a half, Mr. Burke seized the occasion to observe, " that he had lately been taking a view of the blessed fruits of the noble lord's administration; and he had found we were already loaden with ten new taxes, viz. beer, wine, soap, leather, houses, coaches, post-chaises, post-horses, stamps, and servants. It was indeed no wonder that the minister should be at a loss about new taxes, for what fresh burdens could he add to this unhappy nation? We were already taxed if we rode, or if we walked; if we staid at home, or if we went abroad; if we were masters, or if we were servants. In the course of the noble lord's administration, we had expended one hundred millions of money, and sacrificed one hundred thousand lives, and all this without producing in return the least benefit to the nation. On the contrary, the nation had been, in consequence of the wretched misconduct of the minister, deprived of thirteen colonies; to which might be added the loss of Senegal, Penfacola, Minorca, and some of our best west India islands."

Notwithstanding the late majorities in the house of commons, in opposition to the ministers, they seemed to entertain no thoughts of resigning those offices which they had so long and so undeservedly enjoyed. It was therefore thought necessary to move a direct vote of censure upon them, at the close of a series of resolutions brought forward by lord John Cavendish on the eighth of March, importing, as the result of the whole, " that the chief cause of all the national misfortunes is want of foresight and ability in his majesty's ministers."

The motion was seconded by Mr. Powys, who remarked, " that the noble lord at the head of affairs had declared

clared, that whenever parliament should withdraw its confidence from him, he would resign. That period was now come. The confidence of parliament was withdrawn. It was therefore necessary that he should retire from power; and whenever the happy moment should arrive, in which the noble lord, to the unspeakable joy of the nation, should really go to his sovereign to resign his employments, he hoped he would not forget to lay before the king a fair representation of the flourishing state in which he found his majesty's empire when the government of it was intrusted to his hands; and the ruinous condition in which he was about to leave all that remained of it." After a long debate, the order of the day was moved, and on a division was carried by a majority of ten voices, the numbers being 226 to 216.

In a few days a resolution was moved by sir John Rous, member for Suffolk, a man once zealously attached to the present ministry, "that the house, taking into consideration the debt incurred and the losses sustained in the present war, could place no farther confidence in the ministers who had the direction of public affairs." A vehement debate ensued, in the course of which a speech was made by sir James Marriott, judge of the court of admiralty, vindicatory of the ministry and of the war, which he asserted was just in its origin, however unfortunate in its consequences. "And though it had been *pretended*, that the inhabitants of America were not represented in parliament, the fact, he said, was certainly otherwise; for the grant and charter of the lands of the province of Virginia, with which the subsequent grants corresponded, were expressed in the following terms: 'To have and to hold of the king or queen's majesty, as part and parcel of the manor of east Greenwich in the county of Kent, *reddendum* a certain rent at our castle of east Greenwich, &c.' so that the interests of America were in truth, by the nature of their tenure, represented in parliament by the knights of the

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the county of Kent." This astonishing *legal* discovery was received by the house with much less gravity than it was communicated by the learned judge, who seemed not to be at all aware, that no authority of law could give weight to folly, or respectability to nonsense. On the division, the numbers were 227 for, and 236 against the motion. But with such a majority victory was defeat.

Four days after this, March 19, the earl of Surry had proposed to move a resolution of similar import to that of sir John Rous. But when his lordship was about to rise, lord North addressed himself to the speaker, and said, "that as he understood the object of the noble lord's motion to be the removal of ministers, he wished to prevent the necessity of giving the house farther trouble by an explicit declaration, THAT HIS MAJESTY HAD COME TO A DETERMINATION TO MAKE AN ENTIRE CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION: and he and his colleagues only retained their official situation till other ministers were appointed to occupy their places. His lordship thanked the house for the indulgence he had experienced from them in the discharge of his duty, and declared himself ready to answer to his country for his conduct whenever he should be called upon for that purpose." Lord Surry consented, not without reluctance, and by a lenity most pernicious in its consequences, upon this communication, to wave his motion, which, he declared, "was intended to prevent the farther perpetration of those abuses of their trust, to which with impunity, and to the disgrace and detriment of the state, the *late ministers* had for such a length of time proceeded." Thus was this famous, or, to use a term more characteristically appropriate, this infamous administration, so long the bane and curse of the British empire, and of the world at large, suddenly and totally dissolved, to the inexpressible joy of all ranks and orders of people. It was however by many feared, that great difficulty would arise in the formation of a new and efficient administration, on  
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account of the unfortunate division which had long subsisted among the whigs in opposition to the court. Of the two parties, that of lord Rockingham was by far the most numerous and powerful; but, from various causes easily and distinctly ascertainable by attentive observers, the other party, of which since the death of lord Chatham the earl of Shelburne was accounted the head, were in less disfavor with the king;—and the highest department of government was upon this occasion expressly offered to that nobleman by his majesty. For, not to descend to subordinate reasons of preference, it is evident that the chief of the inferior party, lord Shelburne, would, from his comparative weakness of connection, have been more immediately and necessarily dependent than his competitor lord Rockingham upon the crown for protection and support. But the noble lord had the generosity and wisdom to resist the temptation; and the marquis of Rockingham, to the universal satisfaction of the kingdom, was a second time, in a manner the most honourable and flattering to his character and feelings, placed at the head of the treasury; under whom lord John Cavendish acted as chancellor of the exchequer; the earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox were nominated secretaries of state; lord Camden was appointed president of the council; the duke of Grafton reinstated as lord privy seal; admiral Kepple, now created lord Kepple, placed at the head of the Admiralty; general Conway, of the army; the duke of Richmond, of the ordnance. The duke of Portland succeeded lord Carlisle as lord lieutenant of Ireland; Mr. Burke was constituted paymaster of the forces, and colonel Barré, treasurer of the navy. Lord Thurlow alone, by the unaccountable and unmerited indulgence of the new ministers, continued in possession of the great seal. Whiggism was now once more triumphant. The tories, though they escaped by a critical resignation the direct censure of the house of commons, had continued in office till they were reduced to the lowest

est extremity of shame, humiliation and contempt; and a fair prospect, after a long night of storms and darkness, *seemed* to open, of a bright and brilliant day of national prosperity.

The first act of the new administration was to signify by a letter from Mr. Fox to M. Simolin, the Russian ambassador, his Britannic majesty's willingness to accept the mediation offered by the empress for a separate accommodation with Holland, on the basis of the treaty of 1674. But this their high mightinesses thought proper to decline; and considering how much Holland was at this time in the power of his most Christian majesty, whose troops were now in actual possession of the settlement of the Cape, and the island of Eustatius, a compliance was scarcely to be expected. On the contrary, Mr. Adams was at this period formally acknowledged and received by the states general, as minister plenipotentiary of the united states of America. Negotiations for a general peace were however almost immediately commenced between France and Great Britain, and Mr. Grenville was sent to Paris, invested with full powers to treat with all the parties at war.

Previous to the change of administration, sir Henry Clinton had resigned to sir Guy Carleton his command in America, which he had held since the resignation of sir William Howe in the spring of 1778, an interval of near four years, in all which time sir Henry had only taken one town and lost another; and the conquest of Charlestown, in the general estimate of subjugation, was fully counterbalanced by the evacuation of Newport and the other British posts in Rhode island. Instructions were now sent to the new commander and admiral Digby, to acquaint the congress of the pacific views of the English court, and of their readiness to treat on the basis of American independence.

Bills formerly introduced, and negatived, were at a very early period after the appointment of the new minister, re-

vived by Mr. Crew and sir Philip Jennings Clerke, for disabling revenue-officers from voting at elections, and excluding contractors from the house of commons. These now passed with approbation and applause; Mr. secretary Fox declaring, that not an hour should be lost in giving the public the strongest proofs that his majesty's ministers were sincerely determined to make such reforms as should be necessary, and to enforce that system of government which they had repeatedly called for when not in place. He said, "his worst suspicions of the negligence and scandalous mismanagement of the late ministers were now matured into knowledge; that, bad as things had been described, the representation was by no means so bad as the reality. And he should not think that the present ministers acted fairly or honestly by that house, or by the people at large, if they did not institute enquiries which might give the country a true and correct idea of the present situation of affairs."

These bills were vehemently though ineffectually opposed in the house of peers by the lord chancellor, who seemed to hang as a dead weight on the measures of the present administration, whose sentiments could never assimilate with those of men of liberal and comprehensive views, and who now appeared as the avowed and determined enemy of every species of civil or political reform. The attention of parliament was however soon occupied by affairs of much higher moment.

In the month of November last, Mr. Grattan, a distinguished member of the Irish parliament, had moved for a limitation of the perpetual mutiny bill. This was rejected by a great majority, extremely to the dissatisfaction of the people of that kingdom.

At a subsequent meeting of the representatives of one hundred and forty-three corps of volunteers assembled at Dungannon, RESOLUTIONS passed, DECLARATORY of the RIGHTS of IRELAND, and in express terms asserting, "that the

the claim of any body of men, other than the KING, LORDS, and COMMONS of IRELAND, to make laws to bind that kingdom, was unconstitutional and illegal, and a grievance of which it was their decided and unalterable determination to seek the speedy and effectual redress. They knew," they said, " their duty to their sovereign, and were *disposed* to be *loyal*; but they knew also what they owed to themselves, and were RESOLVED TO BE FREE.

In a very short time after these resolves passed, Mr. Grattan moved the house for an address to his majesty, consonant with, and founded upon, the same principles. This motion, after a long and warm debate, was also rejected. But, on the 16th of April 1782, he again moved " a declaration of rights, under the form of an address to the throne." In his speech on this occasion, he pronounced an animated panegyric on the volunteers, and the late conduct of the Irish nation—" He beheld," he said, " with joy and admiration, her progress from injuries to arms, from arms to liberty. The Irish volunteers had supported the rights of the Irish parliament against those temporizing trustees, who would have relinquished them. Allied by liberty still more than by allegiance, Great Britain and Ireland formed a constitutional confederacy. The perpetual annexation of the two crowns was a powerful bond of union, but magna charta was more efficacious still. It would be easy anywhere to find a king, but to England only can we look for a constitution. Ireland was planted by Britons, and was entitled to British privileges. It was by charter, and not by conquest, as had been falsely asserted, that the mutual connection of the two countries was originally established. Every true Irishman, would say, liberty with England, if England is so disposed: but at all events LIBERTY. The Irish nation were too high in pride, character, and power, to suffer any other nation to claim a right to make their laws. Was England ready to acknowledge the independency of Ame-

rica, and would she refuse liberty to Ireland? If she was capable, after enabling his majesty to repeal the declaratory act against America, of wishing to retain that against Ireland, the Irish nation was not capable of submitting to it." Such was the spirit which now pervaded the kingdom, and such the restless enthusiasm excited by the eloquence of Mr. Grattan, that the address was voted without a dissentient voice; and being unanimously acceded to by the peers, was immediately transmitted to the king. In this famous address the two houses affirm, "That the crown of Ireland is an imperial crown, inseparably annexed to the crown of Great Britain, on which connection the interest and happiness of both countries essentially depend: but that the kingdom of Ireland was a distinct kingdom, with a parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof. In this right they conceived the very essence of their liberty to exist. It was a right which they, in behalf of all the people of Ireland, claimed as their birth-right, and which they could not yield but with their lives." They declared, "that they considered the claims of the parliament of Great Britain, in the act passed for better securing the dependency of Ireland, to be irreconcilable to the fundamental rights of that nation." They added, "that they had a high veneration for the British character, and the people of Ireland did not desire to share the freedom of England without likewise sharing her fate;—and it was their determination to stand or fall with the British nation."

Happy indeed was it that a radical change of counsels had taken place in Britain before these high and peremptory, though just and equitable, claims were preferred on the part of Ireland; for the folly, obstinacy, and pride of the late ministers would scarcely have scrupled to involve the empire in a second civil war, rather than have conceded in points which militated so strongly against what they would undoubtedly have styled "the honor and dignity of the crown and the essential interests of the people."

Some

Some days previous to the motion of Mr. Grattan, a royal message was delivered to the house of commons by the secretary of state, " recommending to their most serious consideration the state of affairs in Ireland, in order to such a final adjustment as may give a mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms." And on the 18th of May, Mr. Fox, at the close of a long and able speech, moved for the repeal of the obnoxious act for securing the dependency of Ireland; which he called " a measure of necessity, resulting, however unpleasant it might be to some, from the conduct of the late ministry, who had awakened the present spirit in Ireland, by refusing their most modest and reasonable requests. With that generosity and openness of sentiment by which this eminent statesman has been so long and so remarkably distinguished, Mr. Fox observed nevertheless, " that his own decided opinion had always been, that Ireland, being a part of the British empire, was entitled to the full and equal participation of all the benefits and immunities enjoyed in England, and which were consonant to the principles of the British constitution. His ideas of Ireland corresponded," he said, " exactly with his ideas relative to America. He thought it absurd and unjust for any country to pretend to legislate for another without, much less against, their consent and concurrence; nor could it at any time so legislate to any good purpose. As to Ireland, he made no scruple in the most express and unequivocal terms to declare, that he considered her present claims to be substantially just, and that he felt himself inclined to move the resolution which he was about to propose, in favor of Ireland, as much on the ground of justice as prudence." This repeal, which passed both houses without opposition, was considered in both countries as a virtual renunciation of the claim of legislating for Ireland, And so highly gratified were the Irish parliament and nation with the liberality of these concessions, that a vote of the house of commons in that kingdom passed unanimously  
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for raising twenty thousand seamen for the service of the British navy.

On the 15th of April another message was delivered to the house by Mr. Fox from the king, stating, "That his majesty, taking into consideration the supplies which have been given with so much liberality, and supported by such uncommon firmness and fortitude by his people in the present extensive war, recommended to his faithful commons the consideration of an effectual plan of oeconomy throughout all the branches of the public expenditure." An address of thanks was then moved for, and immediately agreed to by the house; at the close of which it was said, "That a king of Great Britain cannot have so perfect or so honorable a security for every thing which can make a king truly great or truly happy, as in the genuine and natural support of an uninfluenced and independent house of commons." This was language novel and highly pleasing to the respectable part of the public, who had been so long nauseated by the fulsome adulation of the addressees presented of late years to the throne, so contrary to the spirit of freedom, which requires the representatives of the people to respect the majesty of the people, and to use language consonant to the high and dignified situation in which they themselves are placed.

In consequence of this message, Mr. Burke's reform bill was a third time brought forward, under far more favorable auspices than before. By this bill, which now passed the house with little difficulty, the board of trade, and the board of works, with the great wardrobe, were abolished; together with the office of American secretary of state, now rendered useless by the loss of the American colonies;—the offices of treasurer of the chamber, conferrer of the household, the lords of police in Scotland, the paymaster of the pensions, the master of the harriers, the master of the stag-hounds, and six clerks of the board of green cloth. Provision also was made to ena-



ble his majesty to *borrow* a sum for the liquidation of a new arrear of three hundred thousand pounds, by a tax on salaries and pensions; for a debt to this amount had been again contracted by the shameful prodigality of the late ministers, notwithstanding the addition of one hundred thousand pounds per annum, so recently made to the civil list.

The economical abolitions and retrenchments of the reform bill met with a violent opposition in the upper house, from the lords Thurlow and Loughborough, but it finally passed by a great majority. A bill sent up from the commons, for disfranchising certain voters of the borough of Cricklade, who had been proved guilty of the most shameful and scandalous acts of bribery, was also impeded and embarrassed in all its stages by the same law lords, with every possible subtilty of legal quibble and chicanery. The duke of Richmond was upon this occasion provoked to charge the chancellor with indiscriminately opposing every measure of regulation and improvement which was laid before the house. And lord Fortescue, with the unguarded warmth of aristocratic disdain, remarked, "that what he had long feared was at length come to pass;—from the profusion of lawyers introduced into that house, it was no longer an house of lords, it was converted into a mere court of law, where all the solid and honorable principles of truth and justice were sacrificed to the low and miserable chicanery used in Westminster hall. That once venerable, dignified, and august assembly now resembled more a meeting of pettifoggers than an house of parliament. With respect to the learned lord on the woollack, who had now for some years presided in that house, he seemed to be fraught with nothing but contradictions and distinctions and law subtilties. As to himself," lord Fortescue with a noble pride added, "he had not attended a minister's levee, till very lately, for these forty years; and the present ministry he would support

no longer than they deserved it. But as they came into office upon the most honorable and laudable of all principles, the approbation of their sovereign, and the esteem and confidence of the nation, it filled his breast with indignation when he beheld their measures day after day thwarted and opposed, by men who resembled more a set of Cornish attorneys than members of that right honorable house."

On the 3d of May, after a debate of some length, it was resolved by the house of commons, "that all the declarations, orders, and resolutions of that house respecting the election of John Wilkes, esq. be expunged from the journals of the house, as subversive of the rights of the whole body of electors in the kingdom. Mr. Wilkes, in a public letter addressed to his constituents, "congratulated them on the signal reparation they had now obtained for their violated franchises, and the injuries they had sustained under the former flagitious administration." But on this point the feelings of the public were no longer in unison with those of Mr. Wilkes. The vote by which those resolutions were rescinded, which had thirteen years before, thrown the whole nation into a flame, was scarcely noticed; and the case of the Middlesex election was now regarded with nearly as much indifference as that of any other elective decision.

In the same month a subject of infinitely higher importance, and of a nature truly and permanently interesting, was brought under the immediate cognizance of the house, in consequence of a motion made by Mr. Pitt for the appointment of a committee to enquire into the state of the representation of the people in parliament. It is remarkable, that notwithstanding the prodigious and glaring inequality of the national system of representation as now constituted, the idea of a parliamentary reform may be considered in great measure as a novelty in politics. The patriots of elder days, sensible of the dangers arising  
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from the rapid and enormous increase of the regal influence, strongly and repeatedly urged the remedial measures of triennial parliaments, of civil and military reductions, of place and pension bills; but it was a species of merit reserved for the present times to strike at the root of the evil, by an effort to extend and equalize that popular representation, on the purity and integrity of which the national prosperity and welfare so essentially depend.

The evils attending this defective and corrupt state of the representation had at no former period of our history been so flagrantly apparent as in the present reign; and it was with grief and indignation that the intelligent and independent part of the public saw the house of commons degenerate into an assembly apparently possessing neither will, nor power, nor wisdom, but what they derived from the permission and *fiat* of the minister, who also frequently appeared himself the sport of some capricious and invisible agent. The affair of the Middlesex election, otherwise comparatively unimportant, wore in this view a most alarming aspect, as it shewed how far the house would venture to carry their complaisance to the crown, in opposition to the decided, unanimous, and persevering resistance of the people. "The virtue, spirit, and essence of an house of commons," says Mr. Burke in his famous political tract published at that period†, "consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation. An addressing house of commons, and a petitioning nation—an house of commons full of confidence when the nation is plunged in despair, who vote thanks when the nation calls upon them for impeachments, who are eager to grant when the general voice demands account, who in all disputes between the people and administration presume against the people, who punish their disorders, but refuse to enquire into the provocations to them:—this is an

† Thoughts on the causes of the present discontents.

an unnatural, a monstrous state of things in this constitution. Such an assembly is not to any popular purpose an house of COMMONS."

The obstinate prosecution of the American war, and the contemptuous dismissal of the petitions for a reform in the public expenditure, afforded still more recent and striking instances of obsequious and unlimited devotion on the part of the national representatives to the executive power, and their total disregard of the sentiments of their constituents. So struck was the late earl of Chatham with the obvious and manifold mischiefs arising from the present incongruous system, that he scrupled not to hazard a peremptory prediction, that the *rotten boroughs* would not survive the present century—and that if parliament did not reform itself from WITHIN, it would be reformed with a VENGEANCE from WITHOUT." Nevertheless it must be acknowledged there were not wanting many wise and excellent persons, true and firm friends to liberty, whose minds forcibly revolted at the novelty and boldness of the idea of *new-modelling* the representation of the country. They conceived the actual advantages resulting from the constitution, when *rightly administered*, under the present form, too great to risque any experiment, however plausible in theory, of such magnitude as to draw after it consequences which no human sagacity could pretend to trace or fathom,

Totally to annihilate the influence of the crown in the house of commons, would give such an ascendancy to the republican part of the constitution, that the prerogative of the monarch would in a short time be reduced to as low an ebb as the authority of a king of Poland or a doge of Venice; the executive power would lose its weight and energy, and the state would be torn with the opposite and equal claims of hostile and contending factions. To ascertain the precise degree of influence which the monarch ought to possess, was indeed confessed to be a difficult

cult problem to solve. It is the radical and remediless defect of the British form of government, in other respects so admirable, that too much depends on the personal character of the sovereign; and under the reign of a weak, obstinate and bigoted prince, intoxicated with the pomp and pride of royalty, such as imagination can easily feign, the excellence of that celebrated constitution may be put to a very severe test indeed—particularly if, by an accidental concurrence of circumstances, such a monarch, thus palpably unfit to govern, should rise to high and undeserved popularity.

On the other hand, it may doubtless happen that the executive power may possess juster and more enlightened views of policy than the nation at large; and a more popular system of representation would in such circumstances be a real and serious evil. This was remarkably the case in the reigns of king William and king George I. who exerted with very incomplete success their utmost influence to extend and enlarge the general system of liberty. The grand object of every constitution of government which aspires on rational grounds to political perfection is not, as the wild and visionary speculatists of modern times absurdly suppose, to carry the will of the majority at all events into effect, but to concentrate the wisdom, the knowledge, and the virtue of the community; to endow them with influence, and arm them with power. Above all, it excited the alarm of the moderate, the judicious, and truly enlightened, that a great proportion, perhaps a majority, of the advocates for a parliamentary reform maintained the existence of certain abstract rights independent of utility, which is in truth the basis both of right and obligation—in conformity to which the people had a clear original, and imprescriptible claim to the privilege of UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, without the exercise of which it was pretended that no liberty could exist.

The

The duke of Richmond, who had signalized himself as a public and zealous patron of this scheme, expressly says, in his famous letter to colonel Sharman, chairman of the military convention at Dungannon, "that all plans of a merely speculative nature, not tending to the effectual recovery of their RIGHTS, neither could nor *ought* to influence the people in their favor." His grace, in conformity to these sentiments, declares, "that he did not think himself *at liberty* to speculate on the subject, for that every man not laboring under natural or moral disability had an inherent *right of suffrage* paramount to all considerations of civil or political expediency." To this new species of *divine right*, therefore all the inferior and vulgar considerations of public good, of public order, of peace, happiness, and rational subordination, must bow with reverential awe; but it is evident that this inherent right of suffrage cannot exist alone. It necessarily involves in it a right to command, countermand, and dismiss their representatives at pleasure. If the people have an inherent abstract right to elect, then the exercise of this right must be determined by the same abstract rules of political justice—and an equal number of electors must return an equal number of representatives; in other words, population is the sole basis of representation—If therefore the metropolis be supposed to contain one sixth of the entire population of the kingdom, and the representative body to consist of six hundred individuals, London might on this abstract metaphysical hypothesis plead an inherent indefeasible right to send one hundred members to parliament. Other large and populous towns possessing a similar right to elect in the same proportion, a combination of local and particular interests would be formed, totally incompatible with the general interests of the community. But where shall we stop? or how shall the monarchical or aristocratical parts of our constitution

constitution be maintained against these sovereign and indefeasible rights—these paramount and transcendent claims?

All these gross and dangerous absurdities, involving in them the most alarming consequences, proceed from the fatal error of confounding the power of the people with the liberty of the people: To liberty they have a right, so far as it is promotive of happiness; and to power so far, and so far only, as it is a security to liberty. For, to the blind, capricious, and self-destructive will, even of the majority, it is ever lawful—nay more, it is in the highest degree laudable; it is indeed the purest and noblest act of virtue—at the greatest personal risque, to oppose the dictates of reason, equity and justice. Allowing, however, the full force of these general arguments, it could not be denied that the influence of the crown, first systematically employed as an engine of government by sir Robert Walpole, had in this reign extended itself far beyond all its antient bounds and limits. Under that justly celebrated minister also, this influence, however corruptly obtained, was *upon the whole* employed wisely and well; but since the commencement of the NEW SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, which was in fact no other than the old tory system revived and varnished, it had been perverted to the most vile and pernicious purposes. It was no wonder, therefore, that a measure which was regarded as alone adequate to the effectual reduction of this influence should be pursued with zeal and ardor.

Early in the present year it was resolved by the city of London, assembled in common-hall, “that the unequal representation of the people, the corrupt state of parliament, and the perversion thereof from it’s original institution, had been the principal causes of the unjust war with America, and of every grievance of which the nation complained.” Similar resolutions were passed by the county of York, and many other counties and cities;  
and

and after so long and bitter an experience of the evils arising from the present defective state of the representation, it would indeed have argued not so much a wise and well-weighed caution, as a reproachful excess of political timidity in the nation to have hesitated in applying the most permanent and efficacious remedy. The motion of Mr. Pitt, though eloquently enforced by the mover, and supported by Mr. Fox with a great display of discrimination and judgment, was rejected, notwithstanding its present popularity, on a division, by a majority of 161 to 141 voices.

Hitherto the new ministry, though composed of dissonant and jarring materials, had conducted public affairs with at least the appearance of perfect and cordial unanimity—the earl of Shelburne in the upper house bringing forward the same motions, and supporting them by the same general arguments as Mr. Fox in the lower. But an event now took place which was the subject of deep and universal regret, and the consequences of which cannot be sufficiently deplored, in the death of the marquis of Rockingham, July 1, 1782, in the meridian of his age, and at the very height of his political reputation—the weight and influence attached to which, combined with the excellence of his private character, and the mild benignity of his manners, formed that power of attraction which held together the whole ministerial system; and when this ceased to operate, disorder, confusion, and mutual repulsion took place. The splendor of the new constellation faded, and “certain stars shot *madly* from their spheres.”

To drop all metaphorical and poetical allusion, it is necessary to state in plain language, that, on the very day succeeding the decease of the marquis of Rockingham, the earl of Shelburne was declared first lord commissioner of the treasury. The acceptance of this high and pre-eminent office, without any previous communication with his colleagues in administration, was considered by the Rockingham



ingham party as equivalent to a declaration of political hostility on the part of lord Shelburne. It was in effect telling his allies that he conceived his influence in the cabinet to be sufficiently strong to enable him to stand without their assistance. It was evidently setting up a distinct and opposite interest, depending upon the secret assurances of royal favor and support. Precisely the same reasons, which had induced the earl of Shelburne three months before to decline the offer then made, still existed in full force; but he was no longer proof against temptation—though the experience of his illustrious friend lord Chatham might have convinced him on how precarious a ground those ministers stood who depended on courtly promises and professions for protection and safety.

On this promotion, Mr. Fox resigned the seals as secretary of the northern department; lord John Cavendish his office as chancellor of the exchequer; the duke of Portland his government of Ireland, lord Althorp, lord Duncannon, Mr. Frederic Montague, &c. their seats at the board of treasury and admiralty; and Mr. Burke his post of paymaster of the army. In consequence of these resignations and removes, the seals of the southern department were given to the earl of Grantham; and of the northern to Mr. Thomas Townshend, late secretary at war; sir George Young succeeded Mr. Townshend; colonel Barré was made paymaster of the forces; and the lord advocate of Scotland, in his room, treasurer of the navy. The earl of Temple, eldest son of the late George Grenville, succeeded the duke of Portland in the lord lieutenancy of Ireland; but the promotion which attracted most of the public attention was that of Mr. William Pitt, who, at the age of three-and-twenty, was constituted chancellor of the exchequer; an office which had been always supposed to require, in order to its proper discharge, not so much brilliancy of talents, as long previous study and experience, and confirmed habitudes of diligence and industry.

It was evident from several of the late promotions that a mixture of the *old leaven* was again ominously introduced into the present *whig administration*, to which, notwithstanding the late secession, the names of lord Camden, general Conway, the dukes of Grafton and Richmond, lord Keppel, and others, gave great respectability—*exclusive* of the new premier himself, whose public conduct had been uniformly consistent and meritorious, who had never deviated in any instance from the principles of genuine whiggism, whose political knowledge was extensive, whose abilities were unquestionable, and whose general rectitude of intention the public had no just ground to doubt. The only charge brought against the minister, which seemed to make any considerable impression, was that which accused him of the habitual and systematic practice of a certain duplicity and *finesse*, which entirely precluded all open, ingenuous, and confidential intercourse.

In a few days subsequent to his resignation, Mr. Fox stated in the house of commons the grounds and reasons of his conduct. He said, “that political differences of opinion had taken place of great importance in the cabinet, and that he had withdrawn himself from it to prevent that distraction in the public counsels, which he conceived to be ruinous to the public welfare. He had reason, he affirmed, to believe that the day was come when the system on which the administration of lord Rockingham had been formed was to be abandoned, and a new system was to be substituted, or rather the old one revived, with the assistance of the *old men*, or indeed of any men that could be found.—NOR SHOULD HE WONDER IF IN A SHORT TIME, THEY WERE JOINED BY THOSE VERY PERSONS WHOM THAT HOUSE HAD PRECIPITATED FROM THEIR SEATS. He therefore chose to resign, voluntarily relinquishing the pomps, the profits, and the patronage of office, as he could no longer continue in place with honor to himself, or benefit to the public.”

General

General Conway, in reply, "lamented the defection of the distinguished characters who had recently withdrawn themselves from office, at a time when their country so much needed their support. He protested that he knew of no defalcation in the present ministers from those principles which they had originally professed: nor any diversities of opinion in the cabinet, beyond those *shades of difference* which must always arise amongst men of strong and independent minds."

On the following day the duke of Richmond expressed in the house of lords similar regret at the late resignations. "So long, and so long only, as the noble lord who now presided at the board of treasury, should adhere to the principles on which the administration was originally formed, so long would he give him his cordial support. Whenever these principles were abandoned, he would be his most determined opponent."

The earl of Shelburne now rose to declare "his perfect satisfaction at being supported upon the terms stated by the noble duke." He said, "he lamented as much as any man, the death of the late marquis of Rockingham, and the loss sustained by the cabinet in the retreat of two persons so remarkably distinguished, one by the splendor of his abilities, the other by the unimpeached integrity of his character. The office he now held, his lordship affirmed, was within his grasp when the first arrangements were forming, but he had then given way to the noble marquis; though he had now accepted the post, as that nobleman was no more: and this, he believed, was the only reason that the late right honorable secretary had withdrawn himself. But if the monarch was divested of the power of appointing his own *servants*, he would be reduced to the condition of a king of the Mahrattas, who had nothing of sovereignty but the name. He had been charged, his lordship said, with inconsistency relative to America: but his opinion still was, as it ever had been,

that whenever the parliament of Great Britain acknowledged that point, the sun of England's glory was set for ever. Other lords however thought differently, and the question would soon come under the full and impartial discussion of parliament; but he repeated, that if parliament conceded that point, he foresaw that England was undone; for that ruin and independence were linked together—the ruin not of England only, but of America.”

It was sufficiently evident from this speech, that more than “shades of difference” had existed in the cabinet previous to the resignation of Mr. Fox. But it excited the utmost astonishment in America, that such language as this should be held in parliament by the first minister, after sir Guy Carleton had been two months before expressly authorized to declare to the congress, “that his majesty, in order to remove all obstacles to peace, had commissioned Mr. Grenville to propose the independency of the thirteen provinces in the first instance, instead of making it a condition of a general treaty:” and the discordant language held on the different sides of the Atlantic, was indignantly cited as a new instance of British artifice and perfidy. As to the *right* of the king to appoint his own ministers, on which lord Shelburne laid so great stress, it was entirely remote from the point in question, which regarded merely the wisdom and patriotism of his lordship's eager acceptance of an offer, which was evidently calculated to destroy all confidence, and to gratify the aspiring views of a favoured individual, to the extreme eventual detriment of the public.

Had the earl of Shelburne acted with openness and candor in the critical circumstances in which he was placed, there is good ground to believe that his highest ambition might have been gratified, a sincere and cordial union of parties formed, and a firm, efficient, and patriotic administration ultimately established, uncontaminated with the detestable leaven of TORYISM.

On

On the 11th of July 1782, the session terminated, and the speech from the throne contained the welcome declaration, "that nothing could be more repugnant to his majesty's feelings, than the long continuance of so complicated a war; and that his ardent desire of peace had induced him to take every measure which promised the speediest accomplishment of his wishes."

The military events of the year yet remain to be narrated. The fortrefs of Gibraltar still continued closely invested by the Spaniards, and the resolute defence of the garrison began to attract the general attention of Europe. Towards the close of the preceding year, 1781, by a most spirited and successful *sortie*, the stupendous works erected by the Spaniards across the isthmus which connects the rock of Gibraltar with the continent, were stormed and almost totally demolished, when, after immense expence and labor, they were arrived at the highest state of perfection. In less than half an hour five batteries, with all the lines of approach, communication and traverse, were in flames—the magazines blowing up one after another, as the conflagration successively reached them—the astonished Spaniards offering no other resistance, than a distant and ill directed fire from the forts of St. Philip and St. Barbara.

To balance this success, intelligence arrived early in the spring of the new year, that general Murray, governor of Minorca, had been compelled, after a long and vigorous resistance, to surrender that island to the arms of his catholic majesty. Formerly the loss of Minorca had occasioned the downfall of an administration; but such were the infinitely greater misfortunes and disasters of the present war, that this event made little impression upon the public, and it was scarcely remarked, that no attempt whatever had been made for its relief during a siege of one hundred and seventy-one days.

The island of Nevis, in the West Indies, also about the same time surrendered to the marquis de Bouillé and the

count de Grasse; by whom the most liberal terms were granted to the inhabitants. Eight thousand troops, with a formidable train of artillery, were then landed on the important island of St. Christopher. Sir Samuel Hood, who now commanded the British fleet in the West Indies, made strenuous efforts for its relief: and, notwithstanding his disparity of force, in three successive encounters with the count de Grasse he obtained each time the advantage, and at length, by a dextrous manœuvre gained possession of the enemy's anchorage at Basseterre road. Admiral Hood then landed a considerable detachment of troops from Antigua under general Prescott; but general Frazer, the commanding officer on the island, who was strongly posted on an intrenched eminence, sent him word, "that as he had taken the trouble to come with troops to his assistance, he should doubtless be glad of the honor of seeing him, but he was in no want of him or his troops." Notwithstanding this idle vaunt, he was obliged to surrender the island on capitulation, after a siege of five weeks, on the 12th of February 1782.

In the same month Demerary and Isequibe were captured by the French: also the island of Montserrat. The loss of the Bahamas quickly followed, being reduced by a considerable force under don Manuel de Cigagal, governor of the Havannah, to the obedience of the crown of Spain.

On the 19th of February sir George Rodney arrived in the West Indies with a strong reinforcement of ships from England, and resumed the command of the fleet. Mighty preparations were now making both by the French and Spaniards, for the invasion of Jamaica; and as the combined force of these powerful nations amounted to above sixty sail of the line, had a junction been effected, the island was irrecoverably lost. The first object of the British admiral was to intercept a great convoy of troops, provisions, and stores expected from Europe: but in this he was disappointed; the enemy found means to escape his vigilance,

lance, by making the island of Descada, to the northward, and keeping close in shore under the high land of Gaudaloupe and Dominique, and arrived safe at Fort Royale on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March. It was the design of count de Grasse to proceed to Hispaniola, and join the Spanish admiral, don Solano, who was waiting his arrival, in order to make, in conjunction, the pre-concerted attack on Jamaica.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of April, at day-break, the French fleet left the harbor of Fort Royale; and admiral Rodney, who had the earliest intelligence of their movements, instantly made the signal for a general chase. Early the next morning he came up with the enemy under Dominique, where the van of the English engaged the rear of the French, but the continued calms prevented a general or close action. In the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> a fresh gale sprung up, and the chase was renewed: and towards evening the headmost ships of the van gained so much on one or two of the enemy's ships, damaged in the late action, that the count de Grasse thought it necessary to bear down for the purpose of protecting them. Sir George Rodney, who had eagerly watched and waited for this opportunity, now manœuvred the fleet with such skill, as to gain the windward of the enemy during the night, and entirely to preclude their retreat. At seven in the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup>, the two fleets, being ranged in lines directly opposite, engaged with the greatest fury. The French ships being crowded with men, the carnage was prodigious, but no visible impression was made, or material advantage gained till about noon, when sir George Rodney, in the Formidable, followed by his seconds the Namur and the Duke, perceiving an accidental interval which invited the attempt, bore directly with full sail athwart the enemy's line, and successfully broke through, about three ships short of the centre, where the count de Grasse commanded in the Ville de Paris. Being quickly supported by the remainder of his division, the English commander wore round close upon the

the enemy, and actually separated their line, placing the central ships of the French between two fires. This bold and masterly manœuvre proved decisive. The French however continued to fight with the utmost bravery, and the battle lasted till sun-set. The Cæsar was the first ship which struck her colors, having lost her captain, and being almost torn to pieces by the enemy's fire. Soon afterwards, by some unfortunate accident she blew up, and every soul on board perished. The Glorieux, the Hector, the Ardent, now followed the example of the Cæsar, and the Diadem went down by a single broadside. The count de Grasse in the Ville de Paris, beset on all sides, still held out with heroic bravery, and, though reduced to a wreck, seemed to prefer sinking rather than strike to any thing under a flag. At length admiral Hood, in the Barfleur, approached him just at sun-set, and poured in a most destructive fire, which the count yet sustained for some time, till having three men only left alive and unhurt on the upper deck, he at length struck to his gallant antagonist. Night only closed the action: the shattered remains of the French fleet crowded all the sail they could make for Cape François, and in the morning they were out of sight. Sir Samuel Hood being detached to pursue the flying enemy, came up with five sail off Porto Rico, and captured the Jason and Caton ships of the line, and two frigates, the third with difficulty clearing the Mona passage.

Unfortunately the fleet was becalmed for three days after the action, and sir George Rodney did not escape censure for the previous dilatoriness of his pursuit. Whether more might have been done, if more had been attempted, it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine.—“What *had* been is unknown, what *is* appears;”—and certain it is, that this was one of the most glorious and decisive naval victories ever obtained by the arms of Britain.

The number of British ships was 17, and in that of the 9th, on the part of the French, was 23, and at 3000 men, and the wound that, taking



ing the prisoners on board the captured ships also into the computation, the French must have sustained a loss of ten or twelve thousand men.

Their fleet had on board the land forces intended for the Jamaica expedition, and the whole train of artillery, with thirty-six chests of money destined for the use and subsistence of the troops, were found on board the *Ville de Paris* and the other ships now taken.

The designs of the confederated powers were thus most completely frustrated, while the loss of men, including both killed and wounded, on the part of the British, did not exceed eleven hundred.

For this great victory sir George Bridges Rodney was created a peer, of Great Britain, by the title of baron Rodney, of Rodney-stoke, in the county of Somerset, and a perpetual annuity of 2000*l.* annexed to the title. A motion made and over-ruled in the preceding session of parliament, and intended to have been revived by the present ministry, for an enquiry into the conduct at St. Eustatius, was now no more thought of; and the admiral received, as he well deserved, the unanimous thanks of both houses for his eminent services.

The campaign of the present year was destined to be forever signalized in the annals of history, by another event not less glorious to the arms of Britain than the victory of sir George Rodney. The favourite object of Spain, during the whole of this war, was the recovery of the important fortress of Gibraltar; and after the reduction of Minorca, the whole strength of the Spanish monarchy seemed to be directed to this purpose. The duc de Crillon, conqueror of Minorca, was appointed to conduct the siege, and, from the failure of former plans, it was resolved to adopt an entire new mode of operation.

A project was formed by the chevalier D'Arçon, and approved by the Spanish court, to construct a number of floating batteries, on a model which it was imagined would secure them, being either sunk or fired. With this view

view their keels and bottoms were made of an extraordinary thickness, and their sides defended by a kind of rampart, composed of wood and cork long soaked in water, and including between them a large layer of wet sand. The roof was made of a strong rope-work netting, covered with wet hides, and calculated by its sloping position to prevent the shells and bombs from lodging, and to throw them off into the sea before they could produce any effect. The batteries, ten in number, were made of the hulls of large vessels cut down for the purpose, and mounted with heavy brass cannon; and by a most ingenious mechanism, a great variety of pipes and canals perforated all the solid workmanship, in such a manner as to convey a continued succession of water to every part of the vessels.

The preparations were enormous in other respects: about 1200 pieces of heavy ordnance had been brought to the spot, to be employed in the different modes of attack; above eighty gun-boats and bomb-ketches were to second the operations of the floating batteries, with a multitude of frigates, sloops and schooners: and the combined fleets of France and Spain, amounting to fifty sail of the line, were to cover and support the attack, while they heightened the terrible grandeur of the scene. The numbers employed by land and sea against the fortrefs, were estimated at more than 100,000 men.

With this force, and by the fire of three hundred cannon, mortars and howitzers, from the adjacent isthmus, it was intended to attack every part of the British works at one and the same instant. The count D'Artois and the duc de Bourbon, the brother and cousin of the French monarch, and numerous other volunteers of high rank, had repaired to the Spanish camp, in order to witness the inevitable fall of that famous fortress, which had so long bid haughty defiance to the power of Spain.

Early on the morning of the 13th of September, the ten battering ships, commanded by admiral don Moreno, came

to an anchor in a line parallel to the rock, at the distance of about one thousand, or one thousand two hundred yards.—The surrounding hills were covered with people, as though all Spain were assembled to behold the spectacle. The cannonade and bombardment on all sides, from the isthmus to the sea, and the various works of the fortress were tremendously magnificent. The prodigious and uninterrupted showers of red-hot balls, of bombs and carcasses which filled the air, exhibited a scene perhaps unparalleled in military history. The whole peninsula, like some vast volcano discharging on all sides its burning lava, seemed enveloped in a sheet or torrent of fire. The battering ships for many hours remained to all appearance unaffected, but about two in the afternoon the admiral's ship was observed to smoke, and soon after that of the prince of Nassau was observed to be in the same condition. The whole line of attack was now visibly disordered. At length the day having closed, the two first ships appeared to be in flames, and others were beginning to kindle; and signals of distress were universally made. Captain Curtis, who commanded the English marine force in the Bay, to complete the confusion, having advanced to the attack with his gun-boats, and raked the whole line of batteries with his fire, the Spanish launches, which had been employed in bringing off the men, no longer dared to appear; but were compelled, after several had been sunk in the attempt, to abandon their ships to the flames, or the mercy of the English.

The distress of the enemy was now wrought up to the highest pitch of calamity; and the British officers and seamen seeing all resistance at an end, now exerted themselves to the utmost to save the vanquished foe, and their humanity was, at the close of this memorable conflict, no less conspicuous than their valour. Captain Curtis, in particular, exposed himself to the most imminent personal danger; and his pinnace was almost in contact with one of the largest

largest batteries at the moment of explosion. In the end the floating batteries were all consumed; and the loss of the Spaniards, exclusive of that sustained by the troops on the isthmus, was computed at 1500 men, whilst that of the garrison amounted to less than one third of the number.

In the mean time lord Howe, who commanded the grand fleet, consisting of thirty-four sail of the line, was on his passage from Portsmouth in order to throw succours into the fortrefs. He arrived at Cape St. Vincent the 9th of October, and on the 11th he passed the Straits, where the combined fleets had for some time been stationed in order to intercept him; but a violent tempest drove them upon the Barbary coast, and prevented all possibility of attack. The St. Michael, of 72 guns, having separated from the fleet, ran on shore on the rock of Gibraltar, and was taken possession of by the garrison. After fully executing the purpose of his destination, lord Howe set sail for England. The enemy making their appearance off Cape St. Vincent, October 20, the British admiral lay to in order to receive them; but they kept at so great a distance, that the cannonade, which lasted from about five in the afternoon till ten at night, did little damage; and his lordship having no pressing reasons for renewing the fight against so superior a force, continued his voyage without farther molestation to Portsmouth. The governor of Gibraltar, general Elliot, for his gallant and heroic defence of that fortrefs, was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Heathfield, and a pension annexed to the title equal in amount to that granted to sir George Rodney.

This was the last transaction of importance during the continuance of the war in Europe; and thus the military career of Britain, after her repeated misfortunes, terminated with great splendour and *eclat*. All the belligerent powers were now inclined to listen to overtures of pacification. The independence of America being virtually recognized by England, and a resolution against offensive operations

rations having passed the house of commons, the war with the colonies was in fact at an end. The original purpose of France being accomplished, she could have no motive to persevere in a contest, the expence of which was enormous, and the farther success uncertain. Spain, after extraordinary exertions, having failed in both her grand objects, the recovery of Gibraltar, and the conquest of Jamaica, had little reason to flatter herself that her future efforts would be more effectual than the past; and Holland would have neither the inclination or ability to continue the war alone.

During the negotiation with France and Spain, protracted chiefly in consequence of the demand in which Spain for some time resolutely persisted of the cession of Gibraltar, provisional articles of pacification between Great Britain and America were signed on the 30th of November 1782, by which the thirteen provinces were declared free and independent states; and by a boundary line very favorable to America, the whole country southward of the lakes on both sides of the Ohio, and eastward of the Mississippi, was ceded to the colonies, with a full participation of the fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland, and the Gulph of St. Laurence. In return for which the congress engaged to RECOMMEND to the several states to provide for the restitution of the confiscated estates of the loyalists. But this recommendation eventually proved, as might have easily been foreseen, nugatory and useless; and this wretched portion of his majesty's *deluded subjects* migrated in great numbers to the inhospitable wilds of Nova Scotia, and the barren shores of the Bahamas.

Dr. FRANKLIN, so lately the subject of the vilest and grossest abuse, had now the glory of signing this treaty on the part of the united states—the intelligence of which was received in America with emotions of exultation and rapture. The definitive treaty was not however signed till the following year, at the close of which New York, Charlestown,

Westtown, and Savannah, the only place in the possession of the English, were finally evacuated; and general Washington made his public entry into the first of these cities as soon as the royal army was withdrawn. The rejoicings on this occasion were celebrated with patriotic enthusiasm; after which an affecting leave was taken by the general of the friends and companions of his warfare, who accompanied him on his return to his own province, in silent and solemn procession, to the banks of the north river. When the barge quitted the shore, he waved his hat, bidding them for the last time adieu. To this valediction, fixing their regards on their beloved commander till they could no longer distinguish his person, they replied by acclamations intermingled with suppressed sobs and involuntary tears. In every town and village through which the general passed, he was received with the highest demonstrations of gratitude and joy.

When he arrived at Annapolis, he signified to congress his intention to resign the command he had the honor to hold in their service, referring to them the mode in which it should be done. They resolved it should be in a public audience. When the day fixed for that purpose arrived, the hall of the senate house was crowded with personages of the highest merit and distinction; and general Washington, addressing the president in a speech remarkable only for its dignified simplicity, demanded leave to surrender into their hands the trust committed to him, and, having finished the work assigned him, to retire from the great theatre of action to the tranquil scenes of private life, earnestly recommending to the protection of Almighty God the interests of his dear country, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping." To this address the president replied in words to the following purport:—"The united states in congress assembled, receive with emotions too affecting for utterance the solemn resignation of the authority under which you have led our troops

troops with success through a perilous and doubtful war. Called upon by your country to defend its invaded rights, you accepted the sacred charge before it had formed alliances, and whilst it was without friends or a government to support you—you have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power through all disasters and changes—you have, by the love and confidence of your fellow-citizens, enabled them to display their martial genius, and transmit their fame to posterity. Having defended the standard of liberty in this new world, having taught a lesson useful to those who inflict, and to those who feel oppression, you retire with the blessings of your country; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command, it will continue to animate remotest ages. May the Almighty softer a life so beloved with his peculiar care, and may your future days be as happy as your past have been illustrious." The grand and interesting scenes which crowded upon the imagination of the general and the president, almost deprived them of the power of articulation; and the mingled emotions of joy, regret, and admiration, which agitated the minds of the spectators, were expressed more forcibly by looks and gestures than they could have been by words.

Immediately on this resignation, the late commander, "hastened," to use his own words, "with ineffable delight to his seat at Mount Vernon, on the banks of the Potomac;" whence, at the powerful call of his country, he in a short time again emerged in order to assume the high station which he now occupies as president and guardian of that new and noble constitution, which, by one of the happiest and most extraordinary efforts of human virtue, wisdom, and ability, has been substituted in America, to her former feeble, inefficient, and defective form of government.

In Great Britain, to the affairs of which we must now revert, the session of parliament commenced December 5, 1782, with a very excellent speech from the throne, in which, his majesty, reverting after a long and inglorious series of years to the genuine principles of whig policy, declared, "that he had lost no time in giving the necessary orders for prohibiting offensive operations against America, and had been directing his views to a cordial reconciliation with them. Such being his own inclination, and such the sense of his parliament and people, he had not hesitated to conclude with them provisional articles of peace, by which they were acknowledged free and independent states. He deplored this dismemberment of the empire, which had become a matter both of policy and prudence; but testified a hope that religion, language, interest, and affection, would yet prove a permanent tie of union between the two countries. He spake with pride and satisfaction of the late gallant defence of Gibraltar: he recommended an immediate attention to the great objects of public receipt and expenditure, and above all to the state of the national debt. He applauded the liberal principles which had actuated the conduct of parliament respecting Ireland: he pressed a revision of the whole system of trade with a view to its fullest extension; and turning his attention to Asia, pointed out our vast possessions there as a most important object of regulation and care. He declared that the true spirit of the constitution would be the invariable rule of his conduct, and called upon parliament to exercise their temper, wisdom, and disinterestedness."

Loyal addresses were voted in both houses without a division; but some severe remarks having been directed in the house of peers against the inconsistency of the minister, who had at a former period so strongly opposed the recognition of American independence, his lordship declared, "that he had exerted every effort to preserve  
America



America to this country;" and with great animation exclaimed, "that he had not voluntarily yielded up this independency; he had merely submitted to the controlling power of necessity and fate. It was not I, said he, that made this cession—it was the evil star of Britain—it was the blunders of a former administration—it was the power of revolted subjects, and the mighty arms of the house of Bourbon."

Doubts having arisen whether the acknowledgment of independency was absolute or conditional, and lord Shelburne declining to communicate any particulars of a negotiation actually pending, Mr. Fox moved in the house of commons an address to the king, to lay before the house copies of such parts of the provisional articles as related to the same; but this was opposed as inexpedient and improper, not only by the chancellor of the exchequer Mr. Pitt, but by the late minister lord North; and the question being put, Mr. Fox's motion was negatived by a majority of 219 against 46—a division, perhaps fatal to the minister, by inspiring him with high and lofty ideas of his own strength and security.

On the 23d of December the parliament after voting one hundred thousand seamen and marines for the service of the ensuing year, adjourned to the 21st of January 1783—the day preceding which preliminary articles of peace were signed between Great Britain, France, and Spain, which immediately after the recess were submitted to the consideration of the two houses. By this treaty Great Britain guaranteed to France the island of Tobago, and restored that of St. Lucia; also the settlements of Goree and Senegal in Africa; and the city of Pondicherry, with her other conquests in the east, accompanied by some additions of territory. Lastly, the claims of Britain respecting Dunkirk were expressly relinquished; and on her part, France agreed to restore, Tobago excepted, all her valuable and important conquests in the West Indies. His catholic majesty was allowed to retain Minorca  
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and West Florida, East Florida being also ceded in exchange for the Bahamas. Holland having rejected the former advances of the English court towards an accommodation, it was resolved that she should not escape with total impunity; and the British plenipotentiaries were directed to offer the restitution of the Dutch settlements in the possession of England, with the important exception of Trincomalee, which their high mightinesses declared they could not reconcile with the professions of moderation on the part of his Britannic majesty. On the other hand, Holland demanded an indemnification for the losses and expences of the war, a pretension which the English negotiators peremptorily rejected as totally inadmissible. These opposite claims for the present impeded the conclusion of the treaty with that power; but the preliminaries of peace actually signed were laid before the two houses of parliament, by the secretaries of state, lord Grantham and Mr. Townshend, on the 17th of February, and in both they met with a very violent and unexpected opposition.

An address of thanks and approbation being moved in the house of peers by lord Pembroke, and seconded by the marquis of Carmarthen, a succession of able and eloquent speeches were made by the lords Carlisle, Walsingham, Sackville, Stormont, and Loughborough, reprobating the preliminaries of peace as derogatory from the dignity, and in the highest degree injurious to the interests of the nation. "The dereliction of the loyalists of America, and the Indians our allies, was said to be a baseness unexampled in the records of history. In the lowest ebb of distress we ought not to have subscribed to terms so ignominious. Francis I. when conquered and a captive, wrote, 'that all was lost except his honor;' and his magnanimity finally re-established his fortune. The folly of our negotiations was every where apparent. In Africa, our trade was surrendered to France by the cession of Senegal

negal and Goree—in Asia, Pondicherri was not only given back, but, to render the boon more acceptable, a large territory was made to accompany it—in America the prohibitions against fortifying St. Pierre and Miquelon were removed, and the limits of the French fishery extended—and under pretence of drawing a boundary line, the treaty grants to the United States an immense tract of country inhabited by more than twenty Indian nations—in the West Indies, St. Lucia was relinquished, which was of such military importance, that so long as we retained this island in our hands, we might well have stood upon the *uti possidetis*, as the basis of negotiation in that quarter—the cession of East Florida to Spain was an extravagance for which it was impossible to find even the shadow of a pretence—To complete the whole, France was allowed to repair and fortify the harbor of Dunkirk, which, in the event of a future war, might annoy our trade in its centre, and counteract all the advantage of our local situation for foreign commerce; and what is most wonderful, all these sacrifices are made on the professed ground of arranging matters on the principles of RECIPROCITY.”

The minister defended himself from these various attacks with great vigor and ability. His lordship declared, “that PEACE was the object for which the nation at large had discovered the most unequivocal desire; the end he had in view was the advantage of his country, and he was certain that he had attained it. The vast uncultivated tract of land to the southward of the lakes,” his lordship said, “was of infinite consequence to America, and of none to England; and the retention of it, or even of the forts which commanded it, could only have laid the foundation of future hostility. If our liberality to Ireland was the subject of just applause, why act upon principles of illiberality to America, the refusal of the Newfoundland fishery would have been a direct manifestation of hostile intentions; and as it lay on their coasts, it was in re-

ality impossible to exclude them from it by any restrictions; it is an advantage which nature has given them, and to attempt to wrest it from them would not only be unjust, but impracticable. Of one objection his lordship acknowledged that he deeply felt the force. His regret and compassion for the situation of the unhappy loyalists were as pungent as those of their warmest advocates. This objection admitted only of one answer, the answer which he had given to his own bleeding heart—‘It is better that a part should suffer, rather than the whole empire perish.’ He would have dashed from him the bitter cup which the adversities of his country held out to him, if peace had not been absolutely necessary—if it had not been called for with a unanimity and vigor that could not be resisted. No arts of address or negotiation had been neglected, but the American commissioners had no power to concede farther. The congress itself had not the power—for, by the constitution of America, every state was supreme, including in itself the legislative and judicial powers; its jurisdiction, therefore, was not liable to control. In the mode of interposition, by recommendation alone could the congress act. If after all the loyalists should not be received into the bosom of their native country, Britain, penetrated with gratitude for their services, and warm with the feelings of humanity, would afford them an asylum; and it would doubtless be wiser to indemnify them for their losses, than to ruin the nation by a renewal or prolongation of the calamities of war. The cession of East Florida, his lordship said, was rendered unavoidable, by the mistaken and ruinous policy of those ministers who had brought the nation under the miserable necessity of treating with its enemies on terms very different from those it could formerly have commanded. This province, detached from Western Florida, already conquered by the arms of Spain, was however of trivial value; and the amount of its imports and exports bore no proportion

proportion to the expence of its civil establishment. We had, nevertheless, obtained a compensation in the restitution of the Bahamas—although the bounds of the French fishery were somewhat extended, by far the most eligible parts of the Newfoundland coast were left in possession of the English, and a source of future contention removed by the exact ascertainment of limits. In exchange for St. Lucia, France had restored six of the seven islands she had taken, and only retained Tobago—Senegal and Goree had been originally French settlements, but their commerce was inconsiderable; and the whole African trade was open to the English, by our settlements on the river Gambia, which were guaranteed to us by this treaty. The restoration of Pondicherry, and our other conquests in the East, must be acknowledged not a measure of expediency so much as of absolute necessity, if the state of the East India Company were adverted to. Such had been the formidable confederacy against which they were compelled to contend, such the wretched derangement of their finances, and so exposed to hazard were their vast and precarious possessions, that nothing but peace could recover to them their ascendancy in Asia: in such a situation it was impossible to procure terms of accommodation more honorable. The removal of the restraints relative to the harbor of Dunkirk—restraints disgraceful to France, and of trifling advantage to England, was inveighed against without candor or reason; Dunkirk, as a port, was, as his lordship asserted, far from possessing the consequence ascribed to it; it lies near a shoaly part of the channel; it cannot receive ships of a large size, and can never be a rendezvous for squadrons; it may indeed be a resort for privateers, but these we know by experience could easily issue from other ports. In fine, the confederacy formed against us was decidedly superior to our utmost exertions—our taxes were exorbitant—our debts, funded and unfunded, amounted to two hundred and forty-seven millions—our

commerce was rapidly declining—our navy was overbalanced by the fleets of the combined powers, in the alarming proportion of more than fifty ships of the line. Peace was in these circumstances necessary to our existence as a nation. The best terms of accommodation which our situation would admit had been procured; and his lordship ventured to affirm, that they could be decried or opposed only by ignorance, prejudice, or faction.” On a division, the address was carried by a majority of 72 to 59 voices.

A similar address in the house of commons was moved by Mr. Thomas Pitt, and seconded by Mr. Wilberforce, who urged in striking and impressive language the expediency, the necessity, and advantages of peace. On which lord John Cavendish rose and declared, “ that he also professed himself an advocate for peace; but the question was not whether a peace were necessary, but whether a better peace might not have been obtained—this was a question which called for a serious deliberation. As the whole of the evidence proper to be produced was not before the house, it was expedient to pause and hesitate. He proposed therefore to annex to the address the following words: “ His majesty’s faithful commons will proceed to consider of the treaties with that serious and faithful attention which a subject of so much importance to the present and future interests of his majesty’s dominions deserves, assuring his majesty, nevertheless, of their firm and unalterable determination to adhere inviolably to the several articles for which the public faith is pledged.”

This amendment was seconded by Mr. St. John, member for the county of Bedford, and supported with all the power of his eloquence by lord North. “ The address, this nobleman said, called for a vote of approbation, and he had no such vote to give; for he considered the peace as dishonourable and destructive. His lordship wished not, however, to set negotiations aside which had been concluded

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ed under the sanction of prerogative, nor to put those who advised them under PERIL of PUNISHMENT."

Such was the *candor* of the noble lord, and such his *indulgence* to those guilty of the crime of rescuing the nation from the ruin which impended over it, as the inevitable result of that fatal system patronized and supported by the noble lord and his colleagues, till the patience and credulity of an abused and exasperated people were at length exhausted. He who, by his own wretched misconduct, had created the necessity for making the sacrifices in question, ought surely in decency to have been the last man in the nation who should have suggested the profligate idea of putting those who advised them under PERIL of PUNISHMENT.

Mr. Fox now rose, and declared "his perfect concurrence with the sentiments expressed by the noble lord; and in still more bitter terms reprobated the peace as the most disastrous and humiliating that had ever disgraced any country. He had been accused, he said, of having formed an union with the noble lord, whose principles he had opposed for several years of his life; but the grounds of their opposition were removed, and he did not conceive it to be honourable to keep up animosities for ever. He was happy at all times to have a proper opportunity to bury his resentments, and it was the wish of his heart that his friendships should never die. The American war was the source of his disagreement with the noble lord; and that cause of enmity being now no more, it was wise and fit to put an end to the ill-will, the animosity, the feuds, and the rancor which it engendered. It was a satisfaction to him to apply the appellation of FRIEND to the noble lord; he had found him honourable as an adversary, and he had no doubt of his openness and sincerity as a friend."

By a very great and respectable part of the house, this declaration, which opened a perfectly new scene of things, was most indignantly received. Mr. Powys said, "This

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was the age of strange confederacies. The world had seen great and arbitrary despots stand forth the protectors of an infant republic—France and Spain had combined to establish the rising liberties of America. The house now surveyed the counterpart of this picture—a MONSTROUS COALITION had taken place between a noble lord and an illustrious commoner—the lofty assertor of the prerogative had joined in alliance with the worshippers of the majesty of the people.” On the division the effect of this *monstrous coalition* was immediately visible, there appearing for the amendment 224 against 208 voices.

On the 21st of February lord John Cavendish moved a series of resolutions, importing—“ 1. That in consideration of the public faith, his majesty’s faithful commons will assist him in rendering the peace permanent. 2. That in concurrence with his majesty, they will endeavour to improve the blessings of peace to the advantage of the nation. 3. That his majesty, in acknowledging the independency of America, has acted in conformity to the sense of parliament, and to the powers vested in him by the act of the last session. 4. That the concessions made to the adversaries of Great Britain by the provisional treaty, and the preliminary articles, are greater than they were entitled to either from the actual situation of their respective possessions, or from their comparative strength.

A vehement debate arose on the last of these resolutions; the merits of the peace were anew discussed; and the coalition, now openly avowed and gloried in, again underwent the severest crimination, and the most poignant ridicule. Lord North, elated with the prospect not merely of perfect impunity, but of a re-admission to the power and emoluments of office, ventured to express, in high language, “ his amazement at the reflections which had been thrown out against him. He did not, he said, repent of his conduct while a minister; conscious of his own innocence, he bade defiance to censure or punishment. Proud



as he was of the coalition to which he had been invited, it should be understood that he was not disposed to make any sacrifice of his public principles. He dreaded no accusation, and he dared his enemies, whatever might be their abilities, their influence, and their character, to be decisive, and to proceed against him"—expressions surely these, considering the calamities brought upon the nation by the gross and flagrant misconduct of this minister, in the highest degree indecent and insolent. The question being put, was carried against the ministry by a majority of 207 voices to 190.

From this time it was obvious that some change in administration must inevitably take place, but the court hoped that a partial change might suffice. Various conferences were held on the subject of a new arrangement; but the COALITION, knowing their own strength, were determined not to deviate in any point from their preconceived plan. More than a month passed in a kind of ministerial interregnum. At length Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, moved an address to the king, "that he would be graciously pleased to take into consideration the distracted and unsettled state of the empire, and condescend to a compliance with the wishes of this house, by forming an administration entitled to the confidence of his people." This was unanimously carried, and presented to the king by such members of the house as were privy counsellors. His majesty replied, "that it was his earnest desire to do every thing in his power to comply with the wishes of his faithful commons." This answer not giving satisfaction, lord Surry moved in a few days another address, framed in very strong and pointed terms—"assuring his majesty that all delays in a matter of this moment have an inevitable tendency to weaken the authority of his government; and *most humbly entreating* his majesty that he will take such measures towards this object as may quiet the anxiety and apprehension of his faithful subjects." But Mr. Pitt declaring

claring that he had resigned his office of chancellor of the exchequer, and that any resolution or address relative to a new arrangement of administration was unnecessary, lord Surry consented to withdraw his motion: and the ministers, who, reluctant to quit the luxury of power, had lingered in office to the last moment, now gave place to their determined and victorious antagonists.

The duke of Portland was placed at the head of the treasury; and lord John Cavendish was re-appointed chancellor of the exchequer; lord NORTH and Mr. Fox were nominated JOINT SECRETARIES OF STATE, the first for the home, the latter for the foreign department; lord Keppel, who had recently resigned on account of his disapprobation of the peace, was again placed at the head of the admiralty; lord Stormont was created president of the council; and lord Carlisle was advanced to the post of lord privy seal. The great seal was put into commission—the chief justice Loughborough, so distinguished for political versatility, “who could change and change and yet GO ON,” being declared first lord commissioner; the earl Northington was appointed to the government of Ireland; and Mr. Burke reinstated in his former post of paymaster of the forces. Of the seven cabinet ministers, the majority, who also occupied the most important posts of administration, were of the old whig or Rockingham party;—Lord Stormont, lord North, and lord Carlisle, contenting themselves rather with a participation of honors and emoluments than of power.

Notwithstanding the admission of these tory lords therefore into the ministry, it could not but be acknowledged, as to all the grand purposes of government, a WHIG administration—more especially when the ability, the vigor, and the decision of its *efficient leader* were justly and impartially estimated. But, most unfortunately, no impartial estimate of the merits of this novel and heterogeneous arrangement could be hoped. The PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

was

was lost, and universal experience confirms the observation of a celebrated writer, "that the public confidence once lost, is NEVER completely regained." The coalition was the theme of universal and passionate execration. All those bitter and opprobrious expressions of contumely and reproach against the late minister lord North, with which the speeches of Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke had been for so many years filled, were now recalled to the general recollection, and excited a degree of anger, indignation, and amazement, which had not been equalled since the memorable and infamous defection of Mr. Pulteney. When lord Chatham, in one of his last speeches in parliament, "wished that the VENGEANCE of the NATION might fall HEAVY upon the MINISTERS;" when Mr. Fox declared, "that he would pursue even to the SCAFFOLD the authors of the PUBLIC RUIN;" and when Mr. Burke affirmed, "that he had articles of IMPEACHMENT actually framed against lord North, whom he stigmatized as a STATE CRIMINAL;" great allowance ought doubtless to be made for that warmth and ardor of patriotic zeal, which might prompt them to exceed the too precise limits of a strict and sober discretion. The late ministers, it must be acknowledged, had done nothing for which they could justly incur legal punishment. But a parliamentary vote of censure and condemnation of those measures and principles which had brought the nation to the brink of perdition, was eagerly wished for by the independent and intelligent part of the public; and some satisfactory assurance anxiously expected, for the removal of men so unqualified for the task of government, from his majesty's person and councils FOR EVER;—sending them into ignominious retirement, with the CURSES of their COUNTRY upon their HEADS.

Lord Chatham, on receiving not long before his decease, repeated and high-strained professions of amity and regard from lord Bute, apparently intended to cover some  
 insidious

insidious and political purpose, replied without hesitation, "that it was impossible for him to serve the king and country either with lord Bute or lord North; and that if any thing could prevent the consummation of public ruin, it could only be new counsels and new counsellors—a real change, from a sincere conviction of past errors, and not a mere palliation, which must prove fruitless." There are no doubt situations of extraordinary difficulty and danger, which call for the united exertions of those who have been most opposite in sentiments and conduct: but the nation was not at this time disposed to believe, that any peculiar danger to the country existed under the administration of the earl of Shelburne, who, whether in or out of office, had uniformly shewn himself a friend to liberty. The terms of the peace were generally deemed as good as there was any previous reason, from the relative situation of the belligerent powers, to expect; and the COALITION of persons and principles radically hostile, and which no effort of art or length of time could assimilate, was universally branded as a gross and palpable sacrifice of every sentiment of honor, consistency, and rectitude, on the altar of ambition, interest, and revenge.

One of the first measures of the new ministry was to expedite the passing of a bill, before pending, "for the purpose of preventing any writs of error or appeal from the kingdom of Ireland from being received by any of his majesty's courts in Great Britain; and of renouncing in express terms the legislative authority of the British parliament in relation to Ireland." This was a necessary consequence of the general plan of Irish emancipation; for the mere repeal of the declaratory act did not, in the view of the common law, make any difference whatever in the relative situation of the two countries.

Soon after this, a bill was introduced by sir Henry Fletcher, chairman of the East India company, "for suspending the payments of the company now due to the royal

royal exchequer, and for enabling them to borrow the sum of three hundred thousand pounds, for their farther relief."

Lord John Cavendish declared this bill to be only a branch of a larger plan; and that it was brought forward separately, in order to answer an exigency which did not admit of delay. His lordship viewed the territorial acquisitions of the company as a fruitful source of grievance. "It would," he said, "have been more for their advantage, had they confined themselves to the character of merchants. As these acquisitions, however, had been made, they must be preserved, and it was his opinion that the relief necessary to the company should be granted."

Lord Fitzwilliam, in the upper house, dwelt on the almost desperate situation of the East India company, and affirmed, "that, unless it passed, their bankruptcy would be inevitable. The expenditure of their settlements had far exceeded their revenue: bills had been drawn upon them which they were unable to answer without a temporary supply, so that the existence of the company depended upon the success of the bill;" which accordingly passed both houses with little difficulty or opposition.

In the month of April 1783, the chancellor of the exchequer brought forward his plan for raising twelve millions by loan. The most remarkable circumstance attending it was, that the money borrowed was funded at three per cent. at the extravagant rate of one hundred and fifty pounds stock for every hundred pounds sterling; so that an artificial capital of six millions was created beyond and above the sum actually paid into the exchequer. This absurd and pernicious mode of funding was exposed and reprobated with much ability, by Mr. Pitt in the lower house, and the earl of Shelburne in the upper, but with no effect.

The former motion of Mr. Pitt for an enquiry into the state of the representation being negatived, he now brought forward

forward, May 7, a specific plan for adding one hundred members to the counties, and abolishing a proportionable number of the burghage-tenure and other small and obnoxious boroughs. This plan, though supported by Mr. Fox, was negatived by a great majority; the numbers on the division being 293 to 149. As there must of course ever be a stronger opposition against any specific plan of reform in the first instance, than to a comprehensive and general motion of enquiry only, the latter is evidently the most politic as well as reasonable mode of introducing the question to the notice and discussion of the house; and had it been adopted by Mr. Pitt on this occasion, it could not have so egregiously failed of success. The motion was opposed in a very able speech by lord North, who with an happy allusive pleasantry declared, "that while some with LEAR demanded an hundred knights, and others with Goneril were satisfied with fifty, he with Regan exclaimed, no, not ONE!" His lordship, in a graver and more argumentative strain, said, "it was not true that the house of commons had not its full and proper weight in the scale of government;—his political life was a proof that it had. It was parliament that had made him a minister. He came amongst them without connection. It was to them he was indebted for his rise; and they had pulled him down;—he had been the creature of their opinion and of their power;—his political career was consequently a proof of their independence; the voice of the commons was sufficient to remove whatever was displeasing to the sentiments and wishes of the country; and in such a situation to *parade* about a reformation was idle, unnecessary, inexpedient, and dangerous." This reasoning might perhaps have had some degree of weight, could it be lost to the public recollection, that the noble lord was originally advanced to the premierhip by the *fiat* of the *executive power*, and was continued in office, during the first and last years of his administration at least, by the

the influence of the same power, in daring contrariety to the clear, unanimous and decided sense of the nation. His lordship's compulsive resignation at the last, proved only that there are limits, beyond which even the complaisance of the representative body does not extend : and the infatuation of the ministers became at length so notorious, that parliament alarmed at their rashness, and astonished at their folly, happily and critically interposed to save the nation from destruction.

A bill for regulating the trade of the African company being introduced towards the close of the session, with a clause prohibiting the officers of the company from *exporting negroes*, that humane, intelligent, and respectable class of citizens known by the appellation of quakers, convened in their annual assembly in the metropolis, embraced this favorable occasion to petition the house of commons, " that the clause in question might be extended to all persons whatsoever, professing themselves deeply affected with the consideration of the rapine, oppression, and blood attending this traffic :—Under the countenance of the laws of this country, say the petitioners, many thousands of these our fellow-creatures, entitled to the NATURAL RIGHTS OF MANKIND, are held as personal property in cruel bondage. Your petitioners regret, that a nation professing the christian faith should so far counteract the principles of humanity and justice." This petition excited in a remarkable degree the attention of the house and of the public ; and laid the foundation of the subsequent noble and generous, though hitherto\* unsuccessful efforts, to effect a total abolition of this detestable and inhuman commerce—efforts which, however they may terminate, will, in the volume of the *recording angel*, " on leaves more durable than leaves of brass," enroll the names of WILBERFORCE, of SMITH, of DOLBEN, and many others, in the illustrious catalogue of the friends  
and

and benefactors of mankind; and more particularly of that despised and unfortunate race of men born only to misery, and to whose wretched and most compassionate lot it has fallen "to plough the winter's wave, and reap despair." Much business, comprehending details not sufficiently important to demand a place in general history, having been completed, the parliament was at length prorogued, July 16, by a speech, in which his majesty intimated his intention of calling them together at an early period, in order to resume the consideration of the affairs of the East Indies, which would demand their most serious and unintermitted attention.

In the course of the summer, the king, as legally empowered by an act passed for that purpose, issued an order in council, limiting the commerce between the continent of America and the British West India islands to ships British built. This was conformable to the grand principle on which the act of navigation was originally founded; and though this restriction gave extreme offence to the inhabitants of the United States, they could not in reason complain that they were precluded from enjoying the advantages of dependence and independence at one and the same time. The definitive treaties with France, Spain and America, were at this period signed with no material alteration: also preliminaries of peace with the states general, by which all the conquests of England were restored, except the town of Negapatnam on the coast of Coromandel, which their high mightinesses found themselves, however reluctantly, at length compelled to cede.

During this interval of political repose in England, it will not be improper to cast a transient view at the general posture and relative situation of the great continental powers.

One of the most interesting events which, since our last notice of foreign politics, had taken place in Europe, was the



the death of the elector of Bavaria, December 30, 1777. This prince was the last of the Ludovician line of electors, which had been in possession of the duchy and its appendages near five hundred years. These dominions reverted to the heir general of the deceased, Charles Theodore, elector palatine; who being now himself advanced in life, and having no issue, both electorates seemed likely soon to fall into the possession of the duke of Deux-ponts, his nearest relation in the male palatine line. Scarcely, however, had the new elector arrived at Munich, before he found that he was opposed by a rival of such superior force as to leave him no room to hope, however clear his right, for success in the competition.

This was no other than the emperor, who advancing, on grounds of which it would be idle to examine into the validity, his imperial claim to the whole of the lower Bavaria, and to all those districts of the upper which had been formerly the fiefs of the kingdom of Bohemia, caused a vast army to enter the electorate, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the regency, who in vain pleaded the laws of the empire and the rights of sovereignty.

The elector Theodore, equally unable and unwilling to risqué the contest, signed a convention with the emperor in January 1778, in which all the pretended rights of the court of Vienna were allowed and conceded in their fullest extent. This transaction, however, could not fail to excite a general alarm throughout the empire.

The duke of Deux-ponts formally protested against this invasion and dereliction of his rights, and called upon the princes and co-estates of the empire, as members of the Germanic body, and guaranties of the treaty of Westphalia, to interpose for the preservation of the constitution, thus openly violated.

The king of Prussia, who regarded with a jealous eye whatever tended to the aggrandizement of the house of Austria, assumed, as well became him, the lead in this  
important

important and common concern. His several memorials on this subject to the court of Vienna, and to the diet of the empire assembled at Ratibon, were however extremely guarded and temperate, whilst the replies of the imperial court were in the highest degree haughty and supercilious. —“ The court of Vienna knew her own rights, and was the proper judge of them. An *amicable arrangement* had taken place, and his imperial majesty did not think himself accountable to any prince of the empire for the measures he had pursued ; and, being thoroughly satisfied with the JUSTICE of his CAUSE, was resolved to support his pretensions by force of arms.”

The king of Prussia, who evidently appears to have been reluctant to proceed to extremities, at length proposed to the emperor to guarantee to him in full right the cession of two considerable districts of the duchy of Bavaria, contiguous to the Austrian territories, on condition that the court of Vienna would relinquish her remaining claims. But this being refused with disdain, his Prussian majesty published a manifesto early in July 1778, stating “ the unwarrantable and violent conduct of the imperial court, which, if suffered to proceed without controul, would effect the total overthrow of the whole Germanic system.”

It was equally evident on the other hand, that the emperor had from the first expected, and was prepared to risque the event of a war for the sake of this great and most desirable acquisition\*.

With respect to the emperor, this was “ the spring of hope, and the summer of the passions ;” but the monarch of Prussia, who had already attained the highest seat in the temple of fame, and was now fast declining into the vale

\* “ When the emperor surveys the map of Germany,” says a most agreeable and, though a judge of the high court of judicary in Scotland, a most LIBERAL writer, the late lord Gardenstone, “ he may well apply to the electorate of Bavaria the words of the old rapacious neighbour in HORACE,—

————— O si angulus ille  
Proximus accedat qui nunc denormat agellum !”

valle of years, would willingly have avoided a war which presented no glorious or splendid object, and which was imposed upon him by an unwelcome and imperious political necessity.

Saxony, departing from its long and intimate union with the imperial house, now joined with all its forces the king of Prussia, who in the beginning of July entered Bohemia at the head of a vast army on the side of Silesia, while another of nearly equal force, under his brother prince Henry, penetrated the passes of the mountains which separate that kingdom from Saxony. Of the two Austrian armies, the emperor in person commanded one, and the famous marechal Laudohn the other, or to speak more properly both; the whole plan and conduct of this campaign, which on the part of the Austrians was entirely defensive, being ascribed to that justly celebrated general.

After a great variety of military movements and manœuvres unnecessary to particularize, and indeed almost unintelligible in the relation, but which were said on both sides to display uncommon proofs of skill, the king of Prussia, not being able to bring the Austrians to a general action, was finally compelled to evacuate Bohemia with great loss. Marechal Laudohn, in the whole of his operations, seemed closely to have adhered to the model of his renowned predecessor, marechal Traun, whose defensive campaign of 1744 in Bohemia is so highly extolled by the Prussian monarch as a master-piece of professional judgment and ability.

Soon after the termination of the campaign, a negotiation for peace was set on foot by the court of Vienna, whose counsels the emperor could no longer influence. His mother, the empress queen, who possessed all the real and efficient power of the Austrian house, sighed for peace, while the emperor her son was eager and ardent for the prosecution of the war, though nothing could be less encouraging than the prospects now presented to him.

The whole empire was firmly united in opinion and interest in opposition to the imperial claims. Russia openly declared, by her ambassador at Ratisbon, that if the usurpation of Bavaria was not relinquished, she should be under the necessity of furnishing to Prussia the auxiliary troops stipulated by treaty; and even France declared to the diet her resolution in no respect to deviate from her guarantee of the treaty of Westphalia.

There is moreover a possibility that the empress queen, who had in the latter years of her life become a religious devotee, might entertain some *slight scruples* of conscience at the sacrificing so many myriads of lives in support of an act of flagrant perfidy and injustice.

The motives for peace being thus urgent, the preliminary articles were signed at Teschen, May, 13, 1779, in conformity to which the whole electorate was restored to its rightful possessor, the district of Burghausen excepted. The empress did not long survive the pacification she so anxiously sought, dying November 12, 1780, much lamented by her subjects, whom she had governed for forty years with parental affection and indisputable ability.

JOSEPH II. her son early discovered that rage for innovation, without discrimination or judgment, which has in the sequel rendered his name so unfortunately memorable. His character was however as yet very imperfectly known, and Europe thought much better of this monarch, both in regard to the rectitude of his disposition, and the extent of his capacity, than TIME, the grand umpire of opinions, has eventually confirmed. "Ignorant of the sciences belonging to the art of government," says a writer who intimately knew both the man and the monarch, "his intercourse was with people still more ignorant than himself. His ideas were confused, and he attempted in vain to emancipate himself from vulgar prejudices. His pride would admit of no contradiction. He desired to appear infallible, and to impart this infallibility to all his officers.

officers. Flatterers and deceivers pressed round the throne, and, terming his obstinacy firmness, and his restlessness love of glory, steeled his heart, naturally obdurate, against noble and exalted sentiments; and assured him that he would become the greatest of princes, and obscure the glory of the great FREDERIC. Finding insurmountable obstacles to every innovation tending to good, he adopted measures of violence in preference to policy, and would have been in time the greatest of tyrants."

His reign nevertheless commenced with an act of beneficence, truly imperial, in the promulgation of letters patent, granting the free exercise of their religion to the protestants all over the Austrian dominions. By a second edict, he declared all religious foundations in the Austrian Netherlands exempt from all foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and other regulations were adopted for the purpose of reducing the number of religious houses and of discountenancing all monastic institutions.

The Roman pontiff, Pius VI. whose zeal for the church was very great, alarmed at these proceedings, declared to the emperor his intention, notwithstanding his advanced age, to make in person a journey to Vienna, in order to confer with his imperial majesty on the subject of these recent and dangerous innovations. The emperor in reply assured his holiness, that his heart was truly catholic and apostolic; but that with regard to the late regulations, they had been made with due consideration and good advice; and that having already decided upon them, his holiness's journey was in this view entirely superfluous.

The pope however would not be deterred from the execution of his design, and on his actual arrival at Vienna he was treated by the emperor with the highest demonstrations of respect and affection; but no alterations whatever as to public measures took place, as may easily be supposed, in consequence of this visit.

The good understanding of the Russian and Ottoman empires had recently suffered great interruption, in consequence of the opposition of interests involved in the election of a Khan of the Tartars, with respect to which neither power, agreeably to the terms of the late peace, had a right to interfere. An explanatory agreement at length took place, by which the Khan Sahim Guerai, elected through the influence of Russia, was acknowledged as lawful Khan of the Crimea by the Turkish government.

In the year 1782, nevertheless, these disturbances were revived, and the Czarina entered into an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the emperor, in the evident expectation of an immediate war with the porte. And haughty memorials were delivered by the ambassadors of both the imperial courts at Constantinople, insisting that the Ottoman court should not henceforth interpose in the affairs of the Crimea; nor encroach upon the prerogatives of the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia; nor oppose the free navigation of the Euxine.

Soon after this the Khan of the Tartars, in conformity doubtless to the pre-concerted plan of the imperial courts, signified his resolution to resign his crown into the hands of the Czarina. After some affected hesitation, her imperial majesty declared by a public manifesto, dated April 1783, her acceptance of this resignation, and her determination to take once for all the peninsula of the Crimea, together with the island of Taman, and the province of Cuban Tartary, on the other side of the straits of Caffa, extending to Circassia, under her own immediate administration.

The court of Constantinople, roused by this new and unexpected attack, replied to the Russian manifesto with unusual animation and energy.—“What pretensions of right (say they) can her imperial majesty have to territories annexed for ages to the dominion of the porte? would such claims on any part of the Russian empire not be instantly resisted?

resisted? And can it be presumed that the sublime porte, however desirous of peace, will acquiesce in what ambition may term policy, but justice and equity would deem usurpation? What christian power has the porte offended? Whose territories have the Ottoman troops invaded? In the country of what prince is the Turkish standard displayed? Content with the boundaries of empire assigned her by God and his prophet, the wishes of the porte are for peace; but if the court of Russia be determined in her claims, the sublime porte, appealing to the world for the justice of her proceedings, must prepare for war, relying on the decrees of heaven, and confident of the interposition of the prophet of prophets, who will protect his faithful servants in the hour of every difficulty."

The Russian court however appeared no less resolute to maintain and substantiate, than that of Constantinople to resist her claims; and prince Potemkin, a nobleman of great influence and authority at the court of Petersburg, was delegated to take possession of the countries in question, in the name of the empress. A war now therefore appeared inevitable; but happily for the interests of humanity, the two leading kingdoms of Europe were at this period governed by wise and beneficent ministers, who sincerely wished to secure to mankind the inestimable blessings of universal peace. From motives which reflected the highest honor on those celebrated statesmen, the comte de Vergennes and Mr. Fox offered the mediation of their respective sovereigns to effect an accommodation: and the porte perceiving itself in a manner abandoned by France her antient ally, and wholly unable to contend against that tide of adverse fortune which threatened to overwhelm the empire of the Ottomans in final and remediless ruin, at length reluctantly assented to the cession of the provinces actually in the possession of Russia, and a treaty or convention to this purport was signed in the month of January, 1784.

Thus

Thus did the court of Petersburg, with no expence of blood or treasure, acquire an invaluable addition of territory, affording an unbounded scope for the aggrandizement of her commercial and maritime power; and which extended the limits of her empire from the frozen sea of Archangel to the utmost shores of the Euxine. A new city, called Cherson, had been already founded by the emperors in the centre of her Turkish conquests, destined probably, at some future period, to become the emporium of wealth and the seat of power. The former designations of the ceded countries were now by the imperial mandate abolished. Those barbarous names so offensive to classic fastidiousness were no longer heard, and the ancient appellations, after the lapse of a thousand years, restored. The Crimea became the Taurica—Actiar was changed to Sebastopolis—Caffa was lost in Theodosia—and the Bog was happily superseded by the Hypanis.

The political state of the remaining countries of Europe either requires no distinct animadversion, or would lead to discussions not within the limits of the present history. It may however be transiently remarked, that an event very little to be lamented took place February 1777, in the death of Don Joseph I. king of Portugal. His reign was marked in the records of history only by weakness and calamity; it was deeply stained with domestic blood, and rendered detestable by worse than Dionysian devices of cruelty. The earthquake of 1755 had laid his capital in ruins, and shook the kingdom in a political as well as physical sense to its centre. The conspiracy of 1757 awakened all the malignity of ceaseless suspicion, and filled the dungeons of the state with the most virtuous of her citizens. Saved from ruin in the ensuing war with Spain by the interposition of England, this monarch could not forget nor forgive the magnitude of the obligation; and the commerce of the British merchants, under the arbitrary



bitrary and capricious conduct of the marquis de Pombal, his favorite minister, suffered under continual oppression.

He was succeeded by his eldest daughter, Donna Isabella, married by virtue of a papal dispensation to Don Pedro, brother to the late king. At her accession the prison doors were thrown open, and eight hundred persons were set at liberty; but these were said to bear a very small proportion to the numbers who had perished in those regions of darkness and despair, under the sufferings and horrors of their confinement.

Pursuant to the intimation of the concluding speech of the last session, the parliament of Great Britain was convened at an early period of the winter, November 11, 1783; and his majesty stated, as a principal object of their consideration, the situation of the East India Company. "The utmost exertions of their wisdom (he said) would be required to maintain and improve the valuable advantages derived from our India possessions, and to promote and secure the happiness of the native inhabitants of those provinces."

The address passed without opposition. Mr. Pitt in his speech on this occasion warned the ministers, "that as to the affairs of India, it would not be enough to attempt measures of palliation, and of a temporary nature; that would only increase the danger by removing it to a distance and he expressed his surprise that this important business had been so long postponed."

Mr. Fox well pleased at this language, acknowledged "that the state of India was such as would ill-brook delay in their deliberations, and he was happy to give notice that on that day se'enight he should be prepared to make a motion relative to India."

On the 18th of November, accordingly, Mr. Fox moved for leave to bring in a bill for vesting the affairs of the East India Company in the hands of certain commissioners, for the benefit of the proprietary and the public.

lic. The plan proposed by Mr. Fox was marked with all the characteristics of his ardent and daring mind. The total derangement of the finances of the company, and their utter incompetency to govern the vast territories of which they had, by very questionable means, obtained the possession, was too evident to admit of contradiction. The evil was notorious; the only difficulty was to devise an adequate remedy.

This famous bill proposed no less than to take from the directors and proprietors the entire administration, not of their territorial merely, but of their commercial affairs, and to vest the management and direction of them in the hands of seven commissioners named in the bill, and irremovable by the crown, except in consequence of an address of either house of parliament. These were earl Fitzwilliam, president of the board; viscount Lewisham, eldest son to the earl of Dartmouth; the right honorable Frederic Montague, the honorable George Augustus North; sir Gilbert Elliot, sir Henry Fletcher, baronets; and Robert Gregory, esq. who, it could not fail to be remarked, were divided upon the model and in the same proportion as the members of the cabinet.—These commissioners were to be assisted by a subordinate board of nine directors to be named in the first instance by parliament, and afterwards chosen by the proprietors. And the bill empowered these commissioners and directors immediately to enter into possession of all lands, tenements, books records, vessels, goods, merchandize, and securities, in trust for the company.

This act, by which the charter of the company was entirely superseded, was to continue in force four years, that is, till the year after the next general election;—and it was accompanied by a second bill, enacting very excellent, wise, and equitable regulations for the future government of the British territories in Hindostan. The astonishment excited by the disclosure of this plan was very great; and while

while it was on one side of the house extolled as a masterpiece of genius, virtue, and ability, it was on the other reprobated as a deep and dangerous design, fraught with mischief and ruin. "INDIA, it was true," said Mr. Pitt, "wanted reform, but not such a reform as this;—it wanted a *constitutional* alteration, and not a *tyrannical* one, that broke through every principle of equity and justice. By the bill before the house, an attack was made on the most solemn charters: it pointed a fatal blow against the faith and integrity of parliament: it broke through every tie by which man was bound to man. The principle of this bill once established, what security had the other public companies of the kingdom? What security had the bank of England? What security had the national creditors, or the public corporations; Or indeed, what assurance could we have for the GREAT CHARTER itself, the foundation of all our liberties? It would be folly in the extreme to suppose, that the principle, once admitted, would operate only on the present occasion. Good principles might sleep, but bad ones never. It was the curse of society, that when a bad principle was once established, bad men would always be found to give it its full effect. The bill under consideration included a confiscation of the property, and a disfranchisement of the members, of the East India company; all the several articles of whose effects were transferred by violence to strangers. Imagination was at a loss to guess at the most insignificant trifle that had escaped the harpy jaws of a RAVENOUS COALITION. The power was pretended indeed to be given in trust for the benefit of the proprietors; but in case of the grossest abuse of trust, to whom was the appeal? To the proprietors? No:—to the majority of either house of parliament, which the most contemptible minister could not fail to secure, with the patronage of above two millions sterling given by this bill. The influence which would accrue from this bill—a new, enormous, and unexampled influence—was indeed in the highest

highest degree alarming. Seven commissioners chosen ostensibly by parliament, but really by administration, were to involve in the vortex of their authority the patronage and treasures of India. The right honorable moyer had acknowledged himself to be a man of ambition, and it now appeared that he was prepared to sacrifice the king, the parliament, and the people, at the shrine of his ambition. He desired to elevate his present connections to a situation in which no political convulsions, and no variations of power, might be able to destroy their importance, and put an end to their ascendancy."

These and similar arguments against the present extraordinary measure of the minister were also ably and eloquently enforced by the lord advocate, Mr. Jenkinson, Mr. Grenville, and others. On the other hand, it was with equal eloquence and ability vindicated by Mr. Fox, who with warmth declared, "that he would risque upon the execution of this bill whatever was most dear to him—whatever men most valued: the character of integrity, of talents, of honor, of present reputation and future fame;—these he would stake upon the constitutional safety, the enlarged policy, the equity and wisdom of this measure." While the bill was pending, a petition was presented from the company, representing the measure as subversive of their charter, and operating as a confiscation of their property, without charging against them any specific delinquency, without trial, without conviction; a proceeding contrary to the most sacred privileges of British subjects, and praying to be heard by counsel against the bill. The city of London also presented a strong petition to the same effect; but it was carried with rapidity through all its stages in the house of commons by decisive majorities, the division on the second reading being 217 to 103 voices. And on the 9th of December, Mr. Fox, attended by a numerous train of members, presented the bill at the bar of the house of lords. On this occasion, earl Temple  
declared,

declared, " that he was happy to embrace the first opportunity of entering his protest against so INFAMOUS a bill; against a stretch of power so truly alarming, and that went near to seize upon the most inestimable part of our constitution—our CHARTERED RIGHTS."

The duke of Richmond rose on the same side, and displayed in a striking manner the inconsistency of a part at least of the present administration, by a view of the protest entered by lord Rockingham and other noble lords, on the journals of that house, against the India bill of 1773. This famous WHIG protest concludes in the following remarkable words: " If the provisions and precedent of this bill should render the public faith of Great Britain of no estimation, the franchises, rights, and properties of Englishmen precarious; if the boundless fund of corruption furnished by this bill to the servants of the crown should efface every idea of honor, public spirit, and independence, from every rank of people; after struggling vainly against these evils, we have nothing left but the satisfaction of recording our names to posterity, as those who resisted the whole of this iniquitous system, and as men who had no share in betraying to blind prejudices or sordid interest every thing that has hitherto been held sacred in this country." To this protest the signatures of the duke of Portland, who held the highest post under the present administration, and that of lord Fitzwilliam, the future president of the new India board, were affixed. Lord Thurlow declared the present bill " to be a most atrocious violation of private property, in justification of which if the plea of political necessity were urged, that necessity must be proved by evidence at the bar of the house, and not by reports from a committee, to which he should pay as much attention as to the romance of Robinson Crusoe. They were told, that the finances of the company were much deranged; but could parliament in justice forget that the company were restricted from employing that credit which re-

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sulted from its great and flourishing situation? and that if those restrictions were taken off to-morrow, every demand to the state would be discharged? Could parliament forget that the politics of this country had involved the company in an extensive and ruinous war? and that while we encountered loss, misfortune, and disgrace, in every other quarter of the globe, this delinquent company had surmounted the most astonishing difficulties in India? Would parliament forget that when peace was restored to this unfortunate country, the conquests of this delinquent company were given up to prevent farther sacrifices of our more favorite possessions?"

The second reading of the bill took place on the 15th of December†, when counsel was heard at the bar of the house in behalf of the company. At eleven o'clock, the counsel requested of the house an adjournment for the conclusion of their evidence; and a motion being made, it was carried in opposition to the ministers, by 87 to 79 voices.

On the 17th it was moved, That the bill be REJECTED. On this occasion, lord Camden distinguished himself by a most able and eloquent speech, against a measure which his lordship affirmed to be in the highest degree pernicious and unconstitutional. "To divest the company of the management of their own property and commercial concerns was, his lordship said, to treat them as IDIOTS; and

† During this interval, the regular business of the session was proceeding in the usual manner in the house of commons; and on the 12th of December, amongst the ordinary estimates of the year, eighteen thousand pounds were charged for the purchase of the princely mansion of sir Gregory Page, on Blackheath, as a royal military academy;—a sum not more than equal to the value of the materials. And as several thousand pounds would by this means be saved in the repair of the old incommodious building at Woolwich; and likewise an allowance of five hundred pounds per annum for lodgings to the officers, who would henceforth be accommodated in the new academy, the expence was reduced to a mere nothing, whilst the purchase would have done honor to the taste and magnificence of the nation; yet was it opposed with most preposterous obstinacy by some weak and perverse members of the house, as a wanton and scandalous waste of the public money; and the chancellor of the exchequer had the injudicious complaisance to consent to omit it on the report.

and he regarded the bill not so much in the light of a commission of bankruptcy as of lunacy. But as the means of throwing an enormous addition of weight into the scale, not of legal but ministerial influence, it was still more alarming. Were this bill to pass into a law, his lordship forcibly declared, we should see the king of England and the king of Bengal contending for superiority in the British parliament." After a vehement debate, the motion of rejection was carried by 95 against 76 voices. As the first divisions in the upper house were favorable to this bill, it will readily be imagined that some powerful cause, adequate to the extraordinary and unexpected effect produced, must have intervened. The solution of the phenomenon was indeed sufficiently obvious.

On the 11th of December, earl Temple had held a conference with the KING, in the course of which his lordship clearly and fully explained to his majesty the nature and tendency of a bill which had been hitherto honored with the king's entire approbation. The royal indignation was in consequence of this discovery excited in a very high degree. The monarch considered himself as having been **DUPED** and **DECEIVED**. A card was immediately written, stating, "That his majesty allowed earl Temple to say, that whoever voted for the India bill was not only not his friend, but would be considered by him as his enemy. And if these words were not strong enough, earl Temple might use whatever words he might deem stronger or more to the purpose." This interposition becoming a matter of public notoriety, Mr. William Baker, member for Hertford, moved the house of commons on the very day the bill was rejected by the lords, "That it was now necessary to declare, that to report any opinion or pretended opinion of the king upon any bill, or other proceeding, depending in either house of parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, was an high crime and misdemeanor." Mr. Pitt treated the motion lightly, and represented

represented it as unworthy of the dignity of the house, to found any resolutions upon rumors and hearsays.—But earl Nugent, father-in-law to the earl Temple, with more seriousness and firmness declared, “That the resolutions before them went to the utter annihilation of sovereignty. What! Were not peers by their rank and situation hereditary counsellors of the crown?—Would that house dare to derogate from the high dignity which the constitution had annexed to their station? Every peer, and indeed every commoner, under certain restrictions, had a right to address the sovereign. But the tendency of these resolutions was to make the monarch a kind of prisoner of state; and to shut him up from every species of information unacceptable to the existing administration. Were any relation of his in a crisis of difficulty and danger to convey truths to his sovereign of high importance to be known, though at the risk of incurring the utmost punishment which the indignation of that house could inflict, he should consider his conduct not merely as justifiable but transcendently meritorious; and such as would transmit his name with honor to the latest posterity.” Other members acknowledged something of irregularity in these proceedings, and wished that a measure so dangerous might have been counteracted in a mode more open and constitutional; but a great good had been obtained, and in this case it were not wise to examine into the cause with too accurate a discrimination and too severe a scrutiny. The resolution moved by Mr. Baker passed nevertheless by a great majority.

The quarrel between the crown and the ministers, supported as they were by a decided majority of the house of commons, having now become public and palpable, an entire change of administration was at all hazards determined upon. At midnight on the 18th of December, a royal message was sent to the secretaries of state, demanding the seals of their several departments; and early the next morning



morning letters of dismission, signed TEMPLE, were sent to the other members of the cabinet.

In a few days Mr. Pitt was declared first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer; the marquis of Carmarthen, and Mr. Thomas Townshend, created lord Sydney, were nominated secretaries of state; lord Thurlow was reinstated as lord chancellor; earl Gower, created in the sequel marquis of Stafford, as president of the council; the duke of Rutland was constituted lord privy seal; lord Howe placed at the head of the admiralty, and the duke of Richmond of the ordnance. The earl of Northington was recalled from his government of Ireland, to which lord Temple, who had retained the seals of secretary only three days, was again destined to succeed.

To the surprise, and unquestionably to the great eventual detriment of the public, the earl of Shelburne was not included in the new arrangement of administration. The intelligence of this change was, notwithstanding, received by the nation with transports of joy.

The INDIA BILL, concerning which the public judgment was at the first suspended, had now, by a multiplicity of able and popular tracts industriously circulated, been completely developed and explained†; and it was almost universally condemned as a measure in the highest degree arbitrary and oppressive, and with consummate artifice calculated to perpetuate the power of an administration who were the objects of the national detestation. It is nevertheless a supposition absolutely inadmissible, that such men as the duke of Portland, lord John Cavendish, and Mr. Fox, had concerted a measure insidiously adapted to serve their own purpose—knowing or believing the same to be inimical to the essential interests of their country. In fact,

† Amongst these the publications of Mr. Pulteney and Mr. Rous were particularly distinguished, as the productions of men no less impartial than intelligent, truly attached to the principles of liberty, and writing not in the spirit of party or rhetorical exaggeration, but of calm and dispassionate enquiry—solely actuated by the love of TRUTH.

fact, no plan for the government of India could be framed which was not liable to very great objection. The bill of Mr. Fox was primarily and professedly designed for the reformation of abuses in India; and as it was necessary for this purpose to establish a new and extensive source of authority and influence at home, very plausible, and to persons interested, doubtless, very convincing reasons might be adduced to prove it more safe and constitutional to entrust this power to parliamentary commissioners than to the crown, whose influence it had been so lately the grand and favorite object of all true patriots to diminish. Nor was it possible that the parliamentary rejection of this bill could have been attended with such signal effects, had not the popularity of the minister with whom it originated been already completely and for ever annihilated by means of the fatal and ACCURSED COALITION.

On the 22d of December, the house of commons being in a committee on the state of the nation, Mr. Erskine moved, "That an address be presented to the king, stating, that alarming reports had gone forth of an intended dissolution of parliament, and humbly representing to his majesty the inconveniences and dangers of a prorogation or dissolution in the present conjuncture; and entreating the sovereign to hearken to the advice of that house, and not to the secret advice of particular persons who might have private interests of their own separate from the true interests of the king and people."

This address, which was of a complexion unknown in this country since the æra of the revolution, was carried without a division. The answer of the king was very discreet and temperate. His majesty said, "It had been his constant object to employ the authority entrusted to him by the constitution to its true and only end—the good of the people; and he was always happy in concurring with the wishes and opinions of his faithful commons. He trusted they would proceed in the important matters mentioned

tioned in their address with all convenient speed, assuring them that he should not interrupt their meeting after their adjournment by any exercise of his prerogative either of prorogation or dissolution."

The house now with tolerable satisfaction adjourned for the usual Christmas recess to the 10th of January 1784, on which day the committee on the state of the nation was resumed; and several resolutions were brought forward by Mr. Fox, and agreed to by the house—prohibiting the lords of the treasury from assenting to the acceptance of the company's bills from India—forbidding also the issue of any of the public money, after a prorogation or dissolution of parliament, unless the act of appropriation shall have previously passed; and ordering accounts to be laid before the house of the monies already issued.

These resolutions were followed by a motion from the earl of Surry—" 1. That in the present situation of his majesty's dominions it was peculiarly necessary that there should be an administration that had the confidence of the public. 2. That the late changes in his majesty's councils were accompanied by circumstances new and extraordinary, and such as did not conciliate the confidence of that house." On this motion the house divided, but it was carried in the affirmative by 196 to 142 voices.

On the 16th of January a resolution was moved by lord Charles Spencer, " That the continuance of the present ministers in trusts of the highest importance and respectability was contrary to the principles of the constitution, and injurious to the interests of the king and people." Upon this question the house divided, ayes 205, noes 184; so that the anti-ministerial majority was by an ominous defection reduced from 54 to 21 voices.

About this time the chancellor of the exchequer introduced into the house a bill for the better government of India, on principles which left the commercial concerns of the company in their own hands; and established a board

government was solely vested in the king, and that this house had every reason to place the firmest reliance on his majesty's wisdom in the exercise of this prerogative." These resolutions, in the form of an address, were presented to the king. In return, the house of commons (February 16) resolved at the motion of lord Beauchamp, " 1. That the house had not assumed to itself a right to suspend the execution of law; and 2. That for them to declare their opinion respecting the exercise of any discretionary power was constitutional, and agreeable to established usage."

The opposition, who were yet the majority of the house of commons, found themselves daily in a more embarrassing situation. The king, the house of peers, and the nation at large, were now evidently and openly united in sentiment against them; their numbers were continually diminishing, and there was good reason to believe they would soon dwindle in a minority. Unsupported by the voice of the people, the house of commons can never appear great or respectable; but when they are also unsupported by the power and influence of the crown, they must become insignificant and contemptible. Some farther efforts, however, to sustain an apparently sinking cause, were yet with unbroken spirit attempted.

On the 20th of February an address, carried by a majority of 26 voices only, was presented to the king by the house, expressive of " the reliance the house had on the wisdom of the sovereign, that he would take such measures as might tend to give effect to the wishes of his faithful commons, by removing every obstacle to the formation of such an administration as the house of commons had declared to be requisite." To this the king again replied in terms happily adapted to the occasion—mentioning " his recent endeavors to unite in the public service, on a fair and equal footing, those whose joint efforts might have a tendency to put an end to the unhappy divisions and distractions

fractions of the country; observing, nevertheless, that there was no specific charge or complaint suggested against his present ministers, and that numbers of his subjects had expressed to him in the warmest manner their satisfaction at the late changes. Under these circumstances he trusted his faithful commons would not wish that the essential offices of executive government should be vacated until such a plan of union as he had called for, and they had pointed out, could be carried into effect."

On the 1st day of March a yet stronger address was moved and carried, but by a still smaller majority, in which the house "humbly besought his majesty that he would be graciously pleased to lay the foundation of a strong and stable government, by the previous removal of his present ministers." To this the king replied in the same mild and firm language—repeating, that no charge had been brought against his present ministers; and adding this remarkable observation, "that if there were any just ground for their removal, it ought to be equally a reason for not admitting them as a part of that extended and united administration which is stated to be requisite."

Addressees having been unavailingly tried, Mr. Fox in the following week moved a REPRESENTATION to the crown, which at great length, and in energetic language, stated "the dangerous and pernicious tendency of those measures and maxims by which a new system of executive government had been set up; which wanting the confidence of that house, and acting in defiance to their resolutions, must prove at once inadequate by its inefficiency to the necessary objects of government, and dangerous by its example to the liberties of the people." The motion was carried by a MAJORITY of ONE. And here the contest may be said to have terminated; for the mutiny bill being brought forward on the following day, March 9; Mr. Fox, perceiving himself deserted by many of his partisans, abandoned his original intention of moving its postponement,

as a security against a sudden and premature dissolution. The universal sense of the nation in favour of the new ministers, which could no longer be denied, was ascribed to an *unparalleled delusion*; but Mr. Fox disclaiming any intention of obstructing the supplies, a dissolution was said to be in the highest degree indefensible. Little regard, however, was paid to the arguments of the opposition against a measure so evidently to the advantage of the present ministers; and on the 24th of March the parliament was prorogued, and the next day dissolved by proclamation, and a new parliament convened to meet on the 18th of May.

The influence of the crown being now combined with the inclination and independent interest of the country, at the general election the effect produced was prodigious. The COALITIONISTS, even those who once stood highest in the estimation of the public, were almost every where thrown out: lord John Cavendish for the city, Mr. Foljambe the heir of sir George Saville, for the county of York; general Conway, for Bury; Mr. Coke, for Norfolk; Mr. Halley, for Hertfordshire; Mr. Townshend, for Cambridge university; and Mr. Erskine, for Portsmouth. Mr. Fox himself, to the surprise of all, had a clear and great majority on the poll for Westminster, though the high bailiff by a scandalous partiality refused to make the return in his favor—for which an action was subsequently brought by Mr. Fox, in the court of king's-bench, and a verdict with large damages obtained.

The king in his opening speech expressed "great satisfaction at meeting his parliament at this time, after having recurred in so important a moment to the sense of his people. He entertained a just and confident reliance that they were animated by the same sentiments of loyalty and attachment to the constitution which had been so fully manifested in every part of the kingdom. He recommended to their most serious consideration to frame suitable provisions for the good government of our possessions  
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in the East Indies. Upon this subject parliament would not lose sight of the effect which the measures they adopted might have on our own constitution, and our dearest interests at home." The address proposed on this occasion contained strong expressions of approbation respecting the late dissolution, which lord Surry on the ground of unanimity moved to omit. But Mr. Pitt declared, "that much as he was convinced of the importance of unanimity, he would not purchase an hollow unanimity by passing over a great constitutional measure which the circumstances of the times had made necessary and wise, and which had given the most entire satisfaction to every part of the kingdom." On this point, therefore, the house divided, and the amendment of the earl of Surry was rejected by a majority of 76 voices; so that the dissolution appeared to have completely answered its intended purpose, and from this period Mr. Pitt may be regarded as the constitutional and efficient minister of the nation.

The established appellations of WHIG and TORY, as descriptive of the two grand political parties which under these or equivalent terms of distinction will doubtless subsist so long as the present constitution of government shall remain, though greatly changed from their original signification, it would nevertheless be fastidious to reject. The gradations of sentiment and principle which mark their progress it is however of indispensable importance occasionally to specify. The principles of whiggism may indeed in this respect be said to have gained a complete triumph over those of the ancient tories, inasmuch as the once favorite maxims of toryism—passive obedience, non-resistance, and the divine and indefeasible right of monarchy—have fallen into general contempt. Nor can any doctrines bearing the most distant analogy to these monstrous absurdities be now maintained, without the use of such artificial and ambiguous phraseology as, however magnificent in sound

found and show, shall vanish from the touch of reason as mists and vapors from the noon-day sun.

Agreeably then to the vicissitudes which have in a long series of eventful years taken place in the views and sentiments of the opposing parties of the state, a WHIG must now be understood to mean a man who, in addition to the speculative principles of liberty civil and religious which have descended to him from his ancestors, entertains a lively and well-founded jealousy lest the prerogative of the crown should, in consequence of the prodigious increase of its influence, ultimately absorb the whole power and authority of the other branches of the government, and with them the liberties of the nation at large, in its vast and tremendous vortex. A modern whig acknowledges and deeply regrets the improvidence of his ancestors in contributing, by the facility of their compliances, to the accumulation of an immense public debt, and the establishment of a standing army, both of which are yet in a state alarmingly progressive. He can scarcely forgive those extravagant ebullitions of loyalty which could sacrifice the most sacred principles of the constitution to the interest or ambition of the reigning family, in prolonging by a most unjustifiable stretch of power the existence of parliaments to a term of dangerous duration, and in furnishing to a minister little scrupulous of expedients, and regardless of consequences, the means of universal and unbounded corruption. Whatever palliations of the fatal system then adopted, the peculiarity of that minister's situation, and the situation of the country at large in a political view, might then afford, had it was affirmed been long since entirely at an end; but the same system is nevertheless resolutely and uninterruptedly pursued, recovering Antæus-like from every apparent or accidental fall with renewed and redoubled vigor.

On the other hand, the modern Tories, although the descendants of those who long entertained a most inveterate  
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enmity against the family upon the throne, and who from motives not of the purest patriotism vehemently opposed in the former reigns the unconstitutional measures of the whigs, having at length entirely shaken off their old attachments, and being taken into favor and invested with power under the marked and too partial protection of the court, suddenly became its open and zealous advocates—combining, as far as the spirit of the times would admit, the speculative errors of one party with the practical errors of the other. The necessity of strengthening the prerogative of the monarch, and of supporting the DIGNITY of the CROWN, was from this time the incessant theme of their argument and declamation. Concessions and indulgencies were in their estimation things incompatible with the majesty of the regal character. The high, harsh, and peremptory tone of AUTHORITY uniformly marked every act of government under the almost constant predominance of this dangerous faction during the present reign, from the commitment of a printer, or the prosecution of a libeller, to those measures of provocation and oppression terminating in a war which rent in twain and had well nigh subverted the empire.

This party, now grown strong and confident by an unexpected return of prosperity, assumed with ostentatious audacity the appellation of the KING'S FRIENDS, in which novel capacity they hesitated not to give their eager and ardent support to those measures of court policy which had been ever reprobated by the Tories of elder days as in the highest degree pernicious and unconstitutional. The STANDING ARMY, so long the theme of their invective and reproach, was now affirmed to be necessary for the preservation of the national tranquillity; the public debt was pronounced a public benefit; the connection with Hanover was honorable and useful; the influence of the crown was the happy means of consolidating the harmony of the different branches of government; a long parliament was said

to be attended with no such inconvenient consequences as had been previously and erroneously apprehended ; and every attempt to restore that equality in the representation, or rather to remove these glaring inequalities so inconsistent with the spirit of the constitution and the practice of former ages, was opposed and rejected by them in terms of unbounded obloquy and detestation, as leading to nothing less than the absolute subversion of government. They professed on all occasions their dread of innovation and novelty—not adverting to the constant declaration of the antient tories, that the things to which they objected were themselves innovations wholly extraneous to the constitution—and that they who merely wished to *restore* were most unjustly accused of a fondness for innovation, or a dangerous propensity to tamper with the constitution by trying new and hazardous experiments.

Although the high and preposterous notions once prevalent respecting the AUTHORITY of the CHURCH had, in common with the old opinions relative to civil government, gradually fallen into disrepute, the tories of the present reign have been invariably characterized by the strength of their attachment to the ecclesiastical establishment, which they are delighted to applaud and extol as a model of purity and perfection. Any suggestions of the expediency of a reform in the church, whether in relation to the irregularities of its discipline, or the errors of its doctrine as exhibited in a set of obsolete and unintelligible articles of faith, are received by this class of men with a sort of horror, as leading to foul suspicions of sectarian heresy or atheistical profaneness ; while the dissenters of all denominations are on the contrary viewed by them with eyes of jealousy and hatred, and assiduously held up on all occasions as the inveterate enemies of at least one part of the constitution, and as the doubtful friends at best of the other : and every idea of enlarging the limits of the toleration allowed them by law, and much more of extend-

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ing to them the common privileges of citizens, they have uniformly exclaimed against with affected terror and real malignity.

By these grand and leading features are the opposite parties of the present reign clearly discriminated; and whether these parties shall continue to be known under the established denominations of whig and tory, whether by the appellations of court and country, king's friends or patriots, is of little importance, so that the terms be distinctly defined and generally understood; although in different individuals these different systems will of course be blended and diversified by all the possible tints and shades of moral and political variety.

No sooner had the whigs, after a long and laborious opposition, driven their antagonists the tories from the helm, and found themselves in full possession of the powers of government and the confidence of the people, than, in consequence of the unfortunate misunderstanding and subsequent conflict of their leaders, they were again broken and divided; and each division was under the necessity of strengthening itself by forming new and dangerous connections with their former opponents. On the succession of Mr. Fox, the earl of Shelburne called in the aid, though in a somewhat covert manner, of the Jenkinson party; and when a fair prospect of supplanting that nobleman in a short time occurred, Mr. Fox scrupled not, to the astonishment and indignation of the kingdom, publicly to coalesce with lord North and his numerous partisans. The earl of Shelburne having been far more guarded in his previous declarations, as well as his subsequent political associations, escaped the obloquy which attended the more flagrant inconsistency of his once popular rival; who, by openly connecting himself with that individual minister of the crown whom he had so long and so successfully labored to vilify and disgrace, had for ever forfeited his  
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claim to the flattering appellation of "the man of the people."

On the dismissal of the coalition administration, Mr. Pitt, the head of the new ministry, was in a manner compelled, like his predecessor lord Shelburne, to admit no inconsiderable proportion of the tories to share in the honors and emoluments of government; and the nation, equally enraged at the whigs and the tories of the coalition, willingly excused the re-admission of those members of the old tory administration who could plead the recent merit of inveighing against the coalition, and of opposing the India bill of Mr. Fox.

From this mixture of toryism in the new administration, nevertheless, the most pernicious and direful consequences have ultimately resulted. The reign of the present monarch has indeed been distinguished by a strange and dreadful fatality; and the deplorable infatuation almost invariably actuating the national councils, and which has been productive of such mighty mischiefs, may well appear to the contemplative and philosophic mind—penetrating beyond the dark cloud which bounds the view of common observers—the destined means of accomplishing the grand and beneficent purposes of that wisdom in comparison with which the highest human sagacity is as weakness and folly. But these are reflections which more properly appertain to the province of the theologist than the historian.

After the division which took place on the address, and which terminated in the complete triumph of the new ministry, the business which chiefly for a time occupied the attention of the house and of the public, was the complaint stated by Mr. Fox respecting the conduct of the high bailiff of Westminster, who had obstinately and daringly refused to make the return in his favor, although he had upon the face of the poll a majority of 235 votes. Mr. Fox, however, was not deprived of his seat in parliament

ment by this infamous procedure, being, through the interest of his friend sir Thomas Dundas, chosen member for the borough of Kirkwall, in the Orkneys; on which occasion Mr. Pitt, in the height of his exultation, gratified his feelings by a farcaetical delineation of his antagonist, as a man on whom a sort of sentence of banishment had passed—who had been driven by the efforts of patriotic indignation as an exile from his native clime, and forced to seek for refuge on the stormy and desolate shores of the “*Ultima Thulé*.”

On the 24th of May a resolution was moved by Mr. Lee, late attorney general, “that the high bailiff of Westminster on the day upon which the writ of election expired ought to have returned two citizens to serve in parliament for that city.” A violent debate ensued; and the previous question having been moved by sir Lloyd Kenyon, it was ordered that the high bailiff should attend the house on the day following. The sole pretext on which that officer rested his defence was, that having ground to suspect the validity of many votes taken in the course of a poll of six weeks duration, he had granted a *scrutiny*, till the termination of which he could not *in conscience* make the return. To this an obvious and decisive answer presented itself. The scrutiny is nothing more than a revision of the poll by the returning officer; and if such revision is not, and cannot be, completed previous to the period at which the writ is returnable, the officer is bound, by the nature of his office, and the tenor of his oath, to make the return agreeably to the poll as it was actually taken. For if vague presumptions of the nature now alleged were admitted as just causes of procrastination, elections would be thrown entirely into the hands of the returning officer, who, if gained over by the court, might for any indefinite term prevent those who were obnoxious to the administration for the time being from taking their seats in parliament; and the representation of the king-

dom would be thus rendered flagrantly corrupt, partial, and imperfect. Had the high bailiff really felt those *scruples of conscience* by which he pretended to be thus embarrassed, the law of parliament allowed him to include all the candidates in the same return, which would at once have transferred the task and burden of the decision from his own conscience to the conscience of the house. After long pleadings by counsel at the bar of the house on either part, the motion was renewed, "that the high bailiff be directed forthwith to make the return." To the disgrace of the new administration, this motion was vehemently opposed, and on a division finally negatived—the ayes being 117, the noes 195. It was then moved and carried, "that the high bailiff do proceed in the scrutiny with all practicable dispatch." Thus was this business laid at rest during the present session; but the character of the new minister suffered, in consequence of the part which he took in the conduct of it, an indelible stain. Though as yet of years immature and unbackbited in the ways of men, he was indignantly perceived capable with alacrity and eagerness to justify injustice, and to become an active and voluntary instrument of mean and insidious revenge.

On the 16th of June a motion was made by Mr. alderman Sawbridge, and seconded by Mr. alderman Newenham, both of them representatives of the city of London, that a committee be appointed to enquire into the present state of the representation of the commons of Great Britain in parliament. The measure itself had the concurrence and support of Mr. Pitt, though the new minister professed in the usual language of ministers that the *time* was improper; and indeed the motion appears to have been calculated and designed rather to embarrass the minister than to promote the proposed object. Mr. Dundas, who had supported the former proposition of Mr. Pitt, luckily found a distinction which enabled him to oppose the

the present motion, without in the least diminishing his reputation for consistency. His objection was, that the committee now moved for was a select committee, whereas the committee for which he had formerly voted was a committee of the whole house. On the division upon the previous question, the numbers were 201 to 127.

The grand business of the present session, however, was the arrangement of a plan for the future government of India. For this purpose, Mr. Pitt on the 6th of July brought in a bill, founded on the general principles of that rejected by the former parliament, and to which the company had now given their slow and reluctant assent. By this bill a BOARD of CONTROL, composed of a certain number of commissioners of the rank of privy counsellors, was established, the members of which were to be appointed by the king, and removable at his pleasure. This board was authorized to check, superintend, and control the civil and military government and revenue of the company. The dispatches transmitted by the court of directors to the different presidencies were to be previously subjected to the inspection of the superior board, and counter-signed by them; and the directors were enjoined to pay due obedience to the orders of the board, touching civil and military government and revenues; and in case such orders do at any time in the opinion of the directors relate to points not connected therewith, they are empowered to appeal to his majesty in council, whose decision is declared final. The bill moreover enacted, that the appointment of the court of directors to the office of governor-general, president or counsellor in the different presidencies, shall be subject to the approbation and recall of his majesty. As to the zemindars, or great hereditary land-holders of India, who had been violently dispossessed of their property, and who, agreeably to the generous and decisive tenor of Mr. Fox's bill, were to have been universally,  
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and peremptorily reinstated in their zemindaries, the present bill provided only that an enquiry should be instituted in order to restore such as should appear to have been irregularly and unjustly deprived. Lastly, an high tribunal was created for the trial of Indian delinquents, consisting of three judges, one from each court, of four peers and six members of the House of Commons, who were authorized to judge without appeal—to award in case of conviction the punishments of fine and imprisonment—and to declare the party convicted incapable of serving the East India Company. These were the grand and leading features of the bill, and the most transient observation sufficed to shew that the objectionable parts of Mr. Fox's bill had been anxiously and completely avoided. The management of their commercial concerns was left in the hands of the Company, who were divested only of that political power which they had so grossly abused, and of that civil authority to the due exercise of which they were so manifestly incompetent. And this authority was not transferred to persons who like the commissioners of Mr. Fox might attempt to establish an unconstitutional influence in parliament, not merely independent of, but in direct opposition to, the regular and constitutional authority of the crown; but in the effort to steer clear of the rock of Scylla, it was evident that Mr. Pitt had plunged into the gulph of Charybdis, and that by this bill a vast accession of influence resulted to the crown, already possessing a dangerous, formidable and increasing ascendancy over the other branches of the legislature.

Mr. Fox, with his usual powers of discrimination, attacked the weak and exceptionable parts of this bill, although the utmost energy of his eloquence was found inadequate to excite the general attention of the public to the merits or demerits of the measure in question—prepossessed as they now almost universally were in favor of the minister



minister with whom it originated, and in whom they placed the most entire and unlimited confidence. Mr. Fox urged with great force and animation, that this bill established a weak and inefficient government, by dividing its powers. To the one board belonged the privilege of ordering and contriving measures; to the other, that of carrying them into execution. It was a system of dark intrigue and delusive art. By the negative vested in the commissioners, the CHARTERED RIGHTS of the company, on which such stress had been laid, were insidiously undermined and virtually annihilated. If it were right to vest such powers in a board of privy counsellors, let it be done explicitly and openly, and shew the company and the world, that what they dared to do they dared to justify. Founded on principles so heterogeneous, how could such a government be other than the constant victim of internal distraction? The appeal allowed from the decisions of the board of control to the privy council was affirmed by Mr. Fox to be palpably nugatory and ridiculous. The bill he had introduced, exhibited at the first blush the features of openness, fairness, and responsibility. The present plan was full of darkness and disguise. In a covert and concealed mode, an immense patronage was transferred to the crown, which, instead of correcting abuses, opened a door to every species of collusion and corruption. It was calculated to establish an Indian government of the island of Great Britain. Against the clauses of the bill respecting the zemindars, Mr. Fox entered his strongest protest. The zemindars ought, in his opinion, to be rated by a fixed rule of past periods, and not of a vague and indefinite future enquiry. The new tribunal Mr. Fox stigmatized as a screen for delinquents; as a palpable and unconstitutional violation of the sacred right of trial by jury. Since no man was to be tried but on the accusation of the company or the attorney-general, he had only to conciliate government in order to his remaining in perfect security. It was a part of the general

system of deception and delusion, and he would venture to pronounce it a "bed of justice," where justice would for ever sleep. On the motion of commitment, the numbers were ayes 276, noes 61; and it was carried in triumph to the house of peers, where, after an opposition vigorous in point of exertion, but feeble in regard of numbers, the bill passed August 9, 1784. It was accompanied by a protest, in which it was severely branded as a measure ineffectual in its provisions, unjust in its inquisitorial spirit, and unconstitutional in its partial abolition of the trial by jury.

Amongst those who had chiefly distinguished themselves in the investigation of Indian affairs, and whose indignation had been most strongly awakened at the discovery of the enormous oppression exercised in those distant regions, was Mr. Burke. Agreeably, indeed, to the general cast of his character and genius, Mr. Burke's acuteness of research, and that extensive knowledge of the subject which he had acquired by long and indefatigable attention, was obscured and rendered in a great measure useless, and even pernicious, by the violence of his passions, and the obstinacy of his prejudices. Not satisfied with exhibiting facts sufficiently atrocious in their own nature in the simple garb of truth, Mr. Burke was eager upon all occasions to impress the public mind, and heighten the general effect, by all the arts of rhetorical amplification and embellishment. So little of philosophy, however, entered into the oratory of this famous speaker, that the effect produced upon the public mind was directly opposite to that which he himself expected and intended. Amidst the blaze of declamation, and the thunders of invective, the ingenuous enquirer after TRUTH found it insuperably difficult to ascertain with precision those points on which the charge of criminality rested. To the most careless observer, it was apparent that in numerous instances facts were distorted and disguised; that the

the most invidious construction was invariably annexed even to the most indifferent actions; that every thing was seen through the medium of false and artificial colorings; that the dignified candor which gives weight to an accusation was wholly wanting. His calmness was settled rancor; his warmth the phrensy of rage and revenge. Mr. Burke had long singled out Mr. Hastings, late governor general of India, as the object of his most furious attacks; but from the circumstances now enumerated, the feelings of the public were in a considerable degree excited in his favor. Added to this, the successes of the late war in India, contrasted with the defeats and disasters sustained by the nation in all other parts of the globe, cast a certain splendor around the character of Mr. Hastings, who had acquired the popular appellation of the *saviour of India*, while to appreciate the real merits of his long and eventful administration required a sagacity and diligence of research for which the inclination and ability were, to speak in general terms, equally wanting. Mr. Burke had also entirely lost the degree of credit which he once possessed with the public, by standing forward as the avowed advocate and champion of the detested coalition, of which he was indeed more than suspected to have been the original projector, although the bitterness of his former invectives against the late minister lord North could not be exceeded by his most virulent effusions against the more recent object of his intemperate abuse, Mr. Hastings. In a word, Mr. Burke appeared in the view of the public at this period, as a man of talents indeed, but totally destitute of judgment, and even of principle; who, actuated by pride, spleen, ambition, affected to assume the elevated character of a CICERO, dragging a delinquent of the first magnitude—a VERRES, to public justice: while Mr. Hastings, on the other hand, was regarded as a man deserving highly of his country, and

who had from secret and sinister motives become the unfortunate object of an unjust and iniquitous persecution.

Early in July, the minister, Mr. Pitt, acquainted the house with the arrival of sir Elijah Impey, chief judge of the supreme court of judicature at Bengal, who had been recalled by the king, in conformity to an address of that house. Mr. Burke upon this remarked, that the resolutions upon the subject were originally moved and seconded by sir Adam Ferguson and general Smith, who were not members of the present parliament. The charge against the delinquent in question having already received the sanction of that house, it might be proper to proceed against him by impeachment. For his own part, however, he totally declined taking the lead in this business. What hope could he, a solitary and unassisted individual, entertain of success, when the nobleman now presiding in the house of peers had expressly declared, in relation to the reports in which the proceedings originated, that he regarded them no more than the romance of Robinson Crusoe? He therefore earnestly recommended it to the chancellor of the exchequer, as the chief conductor and representative of the executive government, to enforce the resolutions of that house relating to sir Elijah Impey. But Mr. Pitt totally, and in the most unequivocal terms declined any concern in the affair. This was not the only indication of a fixed determination in the present ministry to discountenance all judicial investigation of the antecedent transactions in India.

On the 28th of July, Mr. Burke moved, that the house should resolve itself into a committee, to enquire into the facts stated in the different reports relative to India. He asserted, that his character was at stake. If, as had been suggested, the reports were mere fables, they were indeed calumnies of the most bold and unprincipled nature, and he himself was an infamous calumniator. The two sets of reports originating from the different committees acknowledged

known as their parents Mr. Dundas and himself. The right honorable gentleman had indeed seen the drawn scymitar lifted up to divide and destroy his offspring without discovering any symptom of emotion. But the spectacle was too horrid for his feelings. He wished to intercept the arm of the executioner, and to receive the bloody and flagitious stroke in his own person: "*Adsum qui feci*," exclaimed the orator, "*in me convertite ferrum!*" In contempt of this flight of eloquence, Mr. Dundas coolly moved the *order of the day*.

Disappointed in this attempt, Mr. Burke two days afterwards brought forward a series of resolutions, intended as a foundation for an enquiry into the conduct of Mr. Hastings. On this Mr. Pitt rose, and asked, "how that house, as a house of parliament, knew as a fact the transactions on which Mr. Burke grounded his motions? If the motions passed, from what office were the papers expected to proceed? To relieve the house from these embarrassments, he said, he should move the *order of the day*." This second interruption was more than the patience of Mr. Burke could endure. He affirmed the insensibility of government to the foul enormities lately perpetrated, and still perpetrating, by our countrymen in the east, to be truly shocking. He deprecated the day that the knowledge of them had come to his mind. The miserable objects it exhibited, nations extirpated, provinces desolated, cities and countries overwhelmed in one mass of destruction, constantly dwelt on his imagination. The cries of the native Indians were never out of his ears; an impression of horror had seized on his mind, which deprived him of sleep, and night and day preyed upon his peace. The reality of the facts stated in the reports had been impeached. Why then would not the men who denied them stand forward and support their allegations? Oh! what, said this impassioned orator, would I not give to find the scenes of horror there described nothing more than a fiction!

fiction ! To me it would be a discovery more precious and grateful than the discovery of a new world. He declared, that he wished it for the honor of humanity, from sympathy to millions of suffering and helpless individuals, from an anxious desire to retrieve the honor of the house, and of the country at large, from infamy and execration. He conjured Mr. Pitt to reflect with seriousness on this business. The voice of India cried aloud for justice. He was at a loss, he said, how to account for the callous insensibility of the minister, at a time of life when all the generous feelings of our nature are most lively and susceptible ;—and proceeding in reflections very pointed and personal, he was loudly called to order ; and still persevering in his exclamations and reproaches, was at length compelled to sit down, amidst the universal clamor and tumult of the house.

On the dismissal of this unwelcome business, the attention of the house was immediately transferred to a bill introduced by the minister, for the more effectual prevention of the practice of smuggling, which had of late years arisen to a most alarming height. This bill contained various prudential, but somewhat severe regulations. The distance from shore at which seizures should in future be deemed lawful, was extended, and the constructing of vessels of a certain form and dimension peculiarly calculated for contraband purposes prohibited. But by far the most extraordinary part of the present plan was the reduction of the duties paid by the East India company on the importation of TEA, which was affirmed to be the grand medium of the smuggling traffic ; and the consequent imposition of a new duty on windows, already most grievously burdened, to the amount of the deficiency, estimated at no less than six hundred thousand pounds per annum. This was styled by the minister a commutation tax ; and the equity of it was defended on the general and vague idea that teas being an article of universal consumption,

sumption, the weight of the tax would be compensated by a proportional abatement in the purchase of the commodity. Nothing however could be more fallacious than this statement, nor perhaps any impost more oppressive in its practical operation. It is obvious, that in large towns and cities, ground for the purpose of building being very valuable, houses are erected on a comparatively confined scale, and the number of windows is very moderate. But in small towns and villages, where ground is cheap, houses are for the most part constructed on a more convenient model, with ranges of offices, and windows commanding the court-yards, gardens, &c. contiguous to the dwelling. On these peaceful and rural retreats the tax fell heavily indeed; and the miserable effects of it are fully apparent in the multitude of windows stopped up in farm-houses and other country residences, to the inexpressible injury of the ease, health, and comfort of a very great proportion of the community. But in the metropolis and other opulent and populous towns the tax fell lightly; and in consequence of the greater prevalence of luxury, the reduction of the duty on tea more than compensating in such situations for the addition of the new tax, this measure was applauded as a happy stroke of finance. A vigorous but unavailing opposition to the bill was nevertheless made by Mr. Fox; who asked, what connection there was between an impost upon tea and an impost upon windows, to entitle the latter to be denominated a commutation for the former? He affirmed it to be the essence of financial injustice and oppression to take off a tax upon luxury, and to substitute in its stead a tax upon that which was of indispensable necessity. Spirits were a leading article of smuggling, and a luxury in common use as well as tea. But would the minister venture to pursue the commuting principle of this bill to its full extent, and abolishing the duties on spirituous liquors, to impose another tax upon windows, and assign as a reason, that

that all men may be presumed or expected to drink rum and brandy in their own houses ? The obligations of this kingdom to the East India company, and the vast revenue we derived from the commerce carried on by them, had been much insisted on ; but surely it was at all times easy, without having recourse to their instrumentality, to obtain the same revenue by the same means.

Mr. Courtenay, a member of the house, distinguished no less by the readiness of his wit than the vigor of his understanding, remarked, that the bill now before the house was the counterpart of the detestable *gabelle* or salt-tax in France. There an impost was laid upon that article, and every man was obliged to take and pay for a certain quantity, whether he wanted it or not. As the present administration had in other respects degraded the commons of Great Britain to a level with the parliaments of France, it was indeed perfectly consistent in them to introduce a similar principle of taxation. The bill at length passed the house by a very great majority ; after no very long interval receiving the royal assent ; and it must be confessed, that in a commercial and financial view it has beyond the most sanguine previous calculation answered its intended purpose.

The remaining great operation of finance during this extraordinary session, was the providing for the arrears of the unfunded debt left at the conclusion of the war, amounting to more than twenty millions. This was disposed of partly in the four per cents. and partly in a newly created five per cent. stock, made irredeemable for thirty years, or until twenty-five millions of the existing funds should be extinguished. The taxes for the payment of the interest of this vast sum were, in the present exhausted state of the national finances, upon the whole allowed to be happily and judiciously chosen. It must not be omitted, that the sum of sixty thousand pounds was in the course of the session voted to his majesty, to enable  
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him to discharge the debt contracted in the civil list. This was the fourth grant for the same purpose since the accession of the present king. Much altercation arose on this occasion between the old and the new ministry, as to the precise period when this new debt was incurred. All however that the public at large could be fully certified of was, that with a civil list revenue of eight hundred thousand pounds, afterwards increased to nine hundred thousand pounds per annum, exclusive of the revenues arising from the crown lands, more than fourteen hundred thousand pounds had been voted within the space of about fifteen years, for the payment of the debts of the crown. And the stern observation of the famous MILTON could not but forcibly recur in such circumstances to the public recollection—"That the very trappings of a monarchy were more than sufficient to defray the whole expence of a republic."

The last measure which came under parliamentary discussion during the present session, was a bill introduced by Mr. Dundas, and of a nature perfectly congenial to the urbanity and good humour, which, notwithstanding his political frailties, characterized that able and versatile minister, for the restoration of the estates forfeited in Scotland, in consequence of the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Mr. Dundas declared the measure to be in his opinion worthy of the justice and generosity of parliament. He said, there was not one of the families comprehended in the scope of it, in which some person had not atoned for the crimes and errors of his ancestors, by sacrificing his blood in the cause of his country; and that the sovereign had not for a long series of years past a more loyal set of subjects than the highlanders of Scotland and their chieftains. Of this the late lord Chatham was deeply sensible, and that illustrious statesman had publicly recognized the rectitude of the measure now proposed. And he trusted, that the remains of a system, which, whether directed

directed at first by narrow views or sound policy, ought certainly to be temporary, would be completely annihilated under the administration of his son. He did not however mean, that the estates should be freed from the claims existing against them at the time of forfeiture. This might be regarded as a premium for rebellion. He therefore proposed the appropriation of such sums, amounting to about eighty thousand pounds, to public purposes; fifty thousand of which he would recommend to be employed in the completion of the grand canal reaching from the Frith of Forth to that of Clyde. This bill was received in a manner which did honor to the feelings of the house. Mr. Fox in particular, with his usual generosity, bestowed upon it the highest encomiums, and professed himself deterred only by the lateness of the session, from endeavouring to enlarge its operation to what he conceived to be its just and proper extent. Nevertheless, when the bill was sent to the lords, it met with a most determined and malignant resistance from the lord chancellor who expatiated with much satisfaction on that maxim of ancient wisdom, which pronounced treason to be a crime of so deep a dye, that nothing less was adequate to its punishment than the total eradication of the person, the name, and the family out of the community. Happily, on dividing the house, this nobleman was left in a small and disgraceful minority, and the bill finally passed with that public approbation and applause it so justly merited.

An end was put to the session August 20, 1784, the king returning his warmest thanks to the two houses, for their zealous and diligent attention to the public service. He predicted the happiest effects from the bill for the better government of India. He spoke in terms of high commendation of the laws enacted for the improvement of the revenue. He thanked his faithful commons for their provision for the arrears of the civil list; deploring nevertheless,

theless, in the accustomed style, the *unavoidable burdens* imposed upon his people. He noticed the definitive treaty with Holland, and the peace concluded in India; and trusted, from the assurances of foreign powers, that the present tranquillity would prove of permanent duration.

In the interval between the prorogation of the parliament and its re-assembling in the course of the ensuing winter, the nation enjoyed a flattering and delightful repose. Highly gratified with the recent change which had taken place, they viewed with unbounded complacency and confidence, the minister now at the head of affairs; and indulged the most fond and sanguine hopes, that under his auspices Britain would be restored to her former enviable state of prosperity and greatness: and the name of PITT, endeared by the recollection of all that can interest the feelings of a generous and grateful people, seemed anew consecrated to patriotism, to liberty, and to virtue.

Ireland, however, at this period exhibited a very dissimilar picture. The political tempest which had agitated that kingdom during the latter years of the late war had not yet subsided. Much had indeed been acquired, but much also yet remained to be done. The two questions which at the present juncture chiefly occupied the public attention, were those which related to the state of their commerce, and the state of their representation.

So long since as the 1st of July 1783, the delegates of forty-five volunteer corps had assembled at Lisburne, in the county of Antrim, to consider of the measures proper to be adopted, in order to effect a reform in the national representation. A committee was by them appointed to meet at Belfast, at the head of which presided colonel Sharman. By this committee letters were addressed to many persons in the sister kingdom most distinguished for their talents, their virtues, and their zeal in the cause of liberty, requesting their advice and opinion on this important

portant subject; among these were the duke of Richmond, lord Effingham, Mr. Pitt, Dr. Price, and Dr. Jebb. The most remarkable of the answers returned to this committee was that of the duke of Richmond, who recommended with great force, and in the most decided language, the plan of **UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE**. "All plans merely of a speculative nature," this bold reformer affirmed, had been found insufficient to interest and animate the great body of the people, from whose earnestness alone any reform was to be expected. A long exclusion from any share in the legislation of their country had rendered the great mass of the people indifferent whether the monopoly that subsisted continued in the hands of a more or less extended company; or whether it were divided by them into shares of somewhat more or less just proportion. They had been so often deceived, that they were scarcely now disposed to confide in any set of men. Nothing but self-evident conviction that a measure tended effectually to the recovery of their rights, could, or indeed OUGHT to interest them in its favor."

The meeting at Lisburne was quickly followed by an assembly of delegates held at Dungannon, for the province of Ulster; at which the earl of Charlemont, generalissimo of the volunteer corps throughout the kingdom; Mr. Connolly, considered as the first commoner in point of property; and the bishop of Derry, brother to the late earl of Bristol, nominated in the year 1766 to the lord lieutenancy of Ireland, were present. The provinces of Leinster and Munster followed the example of Ulster—a **NATIONAL CONVENTION** was appointed to be held at Dublin on the 10th of November.

Such was the posture of affairs in that kingdom, when the parliament of Ireland, recently elected, met on the 14th of October 1783. The earl of Northington opened the session with a judicious speech, in which he professed to anticipate the greatest national benefits from the wisdom  
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and temper of the new parliament. On the very first day of the session the thanks of both houses were voted to the different volunteer corps of Ireland for their public services: and a farther proof of the independent spirit now prevalent appeared in the resolution proposed by lord Mountmorres, and which received the sanction of both houses, " That in the present state of the kingdom, it was expedient that there should be a session of parliament held every year."

On the 10th of November the national convention met agreeably to their appointment. Of this formidable assembly the earl of Charlemont was elected president. On the motion of the bishop of Derry, a committee was forthwith appointed to digest a plan of reform, who in a short time reported their opinion, That every *protestant freeholder*, or leaseholder, possessing a freehold or leasehold for a certain term of years of forty shillings value, resident in any city or borough, should be entitled to vote in the election of member for the same: That decayed boroughs should be enabled to return representatives by an extension of franchise to the neighbouring parishes: That the suffrages of the electors should be taken by the sheriff or his deputies on the same day at the respective places of election: That pensioners of the crown, receiving their pensions during pleasure, should be incapacitated from sitting in parliament; that every member of parliament accepting a pension for life, or any place under the crown, should vacate his seat; that each member should subscribe an oath, that he had neither directly nor indirectly given any pecuniary or other consideration, with a view of obtaining the suffrage of any elector; finally, that the duration of parliament should not exceed the term of three years. This report was received by the convention with great applause, and resolutions to the same purport unanimously passed.

On the very next day Mr. Flood, long known by his able and eloquent exertions in the cause of liberty, moved the

the house of commons for leave to bring in a bill for the more equal representation of the people in parliament. It now appeared that the coalition ministers, as yet in the zenith of their power, had formed a fixed determination to oppose to the utmost the encroachments of a dangerous and armed democracy, unknown in their newly assumed capacity to the laws and to the constitution.

Mr. Yelverton, attorney general, declared that the question thus introduced did not deserve to be discussed, but that it ought to be regarded as an insult upon the house. If the bill originated, as it was notorious it did, with a body of armed men, they should decidedly set their faces against receiving it. They did not sit there to receive propositions at the point of the bayonet. He entertained an extreme reverence for the volunteers, for the essential services they had conferred on their country; but when they formed themselves into a political body, to discuss the modes of reforming parliament, and to regulate the affairs of the nation; when they would probe the wounds of the constitution with the sword, he would be their most determined opponent. The question was now, Whether the national convention or the parliament of Ireland were to legislate for the country? What phenomenon was it they had so lately seen? Armed men drawn up in files, preparing the way for other armed men, resorting in fastidious pomp to a general assembly, and displaying all the ostentation of a real parliament! Would they submit to this? Was it decent for parliament to enter into any sort of compromise with this congress? Were the members of that house free in their deliberations while this military congress were sitting? No, it was necessary they should say to the volunteers—"You have obtained a constitution and commerce; and now, instead of dictating to the legislature of the kingdom, go to your own homes, change your attire, and turn your swords, no longer needed for the defence of your country, into plough-shares and pruning-hooks."

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This speech, seconded by the efforts of Mr. Pelham, secretary to the lord lieutenant, and other zealous partisans of government, was decisive; and notwithstanding the ardent exertions of the rival patriots, Mr. Flood and Mr. Grattan, the house at a very late hour divided—Ayes 77, noes 157.

Desirous to fix a still farther stigma on the measures of the convention, it was immediately moved by Mr. Yelverton, "That it was now necessary to declare that this house would support the rights and privileges of parliament against all encroachments."

This resolution being carried by a great majority, an address to the king was moved, expressive of the sense felt by the house of the blessings they enjoyed under his auspices, and assuring him that they were determined to support inviolate the present constitution with their lives and fortunes.

In this address the lords concurred. A protest, however, signed by the earl of Charlemont and four other peers, was entered in the journals of the house against it.

Mr. Flood reported to the national convention, at their sitting of the 1st of December, the conduct of the house of commons; but far from displaying any symptoms of resentment, or even surprise, they came only to a tame and unintelligible resolution, "That they would carry on individually such *investigations* as might be necessary to complete the *plan* of parliamentary reform;" not adverting to their recent and unanimous approval of a plan of reform, which they now virtually discarded as incomplete. But their humiliation was yet more apparent in the address voted on the following day to the king, on the motion of Mr. Flood, in the name of the delegates of all the volunteers of Ireland, "expressive of their duty and loyalty, claiming the merits of their past exertions, and imploring the king that their humble wish to have certain manifest perversions of the parliamentary representation of that kingdom

kingdom remedied by the legislature in some reasonable degree, might not be attributed to any spirit of innovation, but to a sober and laudable desire to uphold the constitution, to confirm the satisfaction of their fellow subjects, and to perpetuate the cordial union of both kingdoms." This act of passive obedience and submission being ended, the convention adjourned *fine die*.

So unexpected and extraordinary a termination of a business which had previously wore so menacing and formidable an aspect, merits some attention. The convention probably did not at all expect a conduct so spirited and decisive on the part of the house of commons. If they resolved on the prosecution of their plan, in direct contravention to the declared sense of the house, the most alarming consequences might be expected to ensue. Exclusive of the personal risque which they must in that case necessarily incur as members of an illegal and TRAITOROUS assembly, they unquestionably neither wished themselves, nor was it by any means clear that their constituents were prepared to support them in any attempt to subvert the established government by force. The prospect of ultimate advantage bore no proportion to the certainty and magnitude of the evil to be encountered. Another consideration of the greatest moment was, that this convention well knew they did not really possess the confidence of the nation, taking that term in its proper and most extensive sense. It was an undoubted fact that more than two thirds of the inhabitants of the kingdom were catholics, who, if the proposed plan of reform had been adopted, would receive no benefit from it; and who were of course wholly indifferent as to the success of it. By some daring and decisive spirits it was indeed proposed at the provincial meetings, to place the catholics in the new order of things precisely upon the same footing with the protestants. This would indeed have given irresistible weight to the application; but men capable of cool and sober reflection; though firm and  
zealous



zealous friends to safe and moderate reform, were with reason startled at the idea of so novel and hazardous an experiment.—The notion of abstract rights, founded on a false metaphysic theory, will never operate powerfully but on the minds of speculatists, who, remote from scenes of action and danger, “dream over books, and leave mankind unknown.”

The real practical enquiry with the generality of persons on this grand question of UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, as it undoubtedly ought to be on all occasions of a political nature, was—What will be the EFFECT PRODUCED? And it was obvious that the recognition of this claim would at once throw the entire power of the kingdom into the hands of the catholics; and no credulity could surely reach that degree of infatuation, as to expect a body of men so ignorant, bigoted and ferocious, as the collective mass of the Irish catholics, to make a wise and temperate use of the power thus preposterously put into their hands.

To reform the government and constitution upon protestant principles, and still to preserve the *protestant ascendancy*, was all that, in present circumstances, the state of the kingdom would bear; and all that an enlightened benevolence would consequently aim to accomplish. A liberal and patriotic protestant government would undoubtedly relieve the catholics from all positive penalties, and grant them a participation of all civil rights and privileges consistent with a regard to its own safety. And in consequence of the gradual and certain diffusion of knowledge under a mild and beneficent government, there was good reason to hope that the time would at no very distant period arrive, when all distinctions might be safely and for ever extinguished. The national convention saw clearly the dilemma to which it was reduced; but they chose what appeared to them the least of the two evils, and rather than call in the aid of the great body of catholics, without which their strength was unequal to the contest, they submitted

quietly and tamely to the chastisement of that government whose authority they had insulted, and in a manner defined: incurring by this means the censure of the moderate for their violence, and of the violent for their moderation.

The parliament of Ireland adjourned for the Christmas recess, on the 22d of December (1783). Previous to their re-assembling, that memorable ministerial revolution had taken place in England, which advanced Mr. Pitt to the helm of government, and the duke of Rutland had in consequence superseded the earl of Northington in the viceroyalty of Ireland.

On the 13th of March (1784) Mr. Flood renewed his motion, as it was hoped by the friends of parliamentary reform, under more favourable auspices, the new English minister having distinguished himself as one of its most eloquent and zealous advocates. Mr. Yelverton having been for his recent services promoted to the high station of lord chief baron of the court of exchequer, Mr. Fitzgibbon, who succeeded him in the office of attorney general, opposed the present motion with equal zeal, though he allowed that as it now came before the house in a regular and constitutional form, supported by numerous petitions from different parts of the kingdom, it was entitled to respect and attention. On the second reading it was nevertheless rejected on a division, by 159 to 85 voices.

This final decision was received with secret satisfaction by those friends of reform who dreaded the emancipation of the catholics, as an evil yet greater than the permanent predominance of the present system of influence and corruption. But the murmurs of the majority were distinctly heard. The Ulster volunteers, who had from the commencement of the business stood conspicuous in the van, presented on a subsequent occasion an address to their general, the earl of Charlemont, expressing "their satisfaction at the decay of those prejudices which had so long involved the nation in feud and disunion—a disunion, which, by

by LIMITING the RIGHTS of SUFFRAGE, and circumscribing the number of their citizens, had in a great degree created and fostered the aristocratic tyranny, the source of every grievance, and against which the public voice now unanimously exclaimed." The earl of Charlemont, in reply, coldly professed himself " free from every illiberal prejudice against the catholics, but he could not refrain from the most ardent entreaties to the volunteers, to desist from a pursuit that would fatally clog and impede the prosecution of their favorite purpose; and besought them not to indulge any opinion which must and would create disunion." This answer being assiduously circulated throughout the kingdom, effectually caused, or most sensibly heightened that disunion which it professed to deprecate. The object itself seemed now relinquished in despair, and the triumph of the court was complete.

The other grand object to which the attention of the kingdom of Ireland was at this period directed, related to the actual state of her commerce. The free trade granted to the Irish nation had produced none of those advantages respecting which she had indulged such sanguine and credulous expectations. The manufacturers, and lower classes of the people in general, were exposed to all the evils arising from the extremest indigence; and it began to be clearly perceived, that while the present system of commercial intercourse with England subsisted, there was little prospect of a favourable change in the situation of Ireland. While all English manufactures and commodities were imported at a trifling per-centage *ad valorem* into the Irish ports, duties amounting nearly to a prohibition were imposed upon the produce or manufactures of Ireland, with one very important exception, that of LINEN, on the importation into England. The general voice of the people of Ireland now loudly called for PROTECTING DUTIES, in order to foster the infant manufactures of that country.

and to compel the inhabitants to consume the produce of native ingenuity and industry.

On the 31 of March Mr. Gardiner, member for the county Dublin, in an able speech depicted the distresses of the kingdom, traced the cause, and pointed out the remedy. He contrasted the condition of the people of Ireland with that of the people of England. He asked, "What was the reason of so vast a difference? Were Irishmen less capable by nature of earning a livelihood than their neighbors? Was there any disadvantage in the nature of their climate, or was the situation of their country, a situation adapted to render them the general mart of Europe, such as to prevent their prosperity? No people were more laborious, more ingenious, or more active. There was not any branch of manufacture in which they were encouraged, that they had not carried to an high degree of perfection. If then the evil did not arise from any of these causes, to what was it to be attributed, but to the vast importation of foreign articles, by which a home consumption was denied, and their manufactures nipped in the bud? Mr. Gardiner therefore called upon the house to copy the conduct of England, of France, and other commercial countries, by *protecting* their manufactures at home. From an adherence to the system now recommended, England, notwithstanding the pressure of an immense debt of two hundred and forty millions, had attained to a pitch of greatness truly astonishing."

At the conclusion of his speech, Mr. Gardiner moved for an high duty on woollens imported into the kingdom—This, after a very warm debate, was negatived by a vast majority; and the whole system of *protecting duties* ridiculed and reprobated as futile, visionary, and pernicious. At the failure of this second grand attempt at relief and reform, the disappointment of the people kindled into rage, and the short-lived popularity of the new viceroy, founded on the extreme unpopularity in Ireland, no less than

than in England, of the preceding coalition ministry, was now in the space of a month—*a little month*—entirely at an end.

Such was the state of the metropolis at this period, that it was thought necessary to countermand the embarkation of several regiments destined to the East Indies, and to furnish the garrison of Dublin, consisting of about 4000 regular troops, with thirty rounds of powder and ball per man. Before the end of the session an address was unanimously voted by the house of commons to the sovereign, representing the distressed state of the kingdom, and praying for the establishment of a more advantageous system of commerce between Ireland and Great Britain; and on the 14th of May 1784 the parliament was prorogued. The last measure adopted by this assembly seemed in some measure to calm the violence of the people, and to suspend the effervescence of their anger and discontent.

On the 7th of June an extraordinary meeting of the aggregate body of the citizens of Dublin was convened by the sheriffs, in which they came to several important resolutions, declaratory of “the clear, original, and inalienable right of the people of Ireland to a frequent election, and an equal representation, They call upon the nation to unite with them in the measures necessary to its introduction, and in presenting petitions to the king for a dissolution of the existing parliament. They assert, that the force of the state consists in the union of the inhabitants—that an equal participation in ALL the rights of a man and a citizen was proper, henceforth, to engage all the members of the state to co-operate efficaciously for the greatest general good. Finally, that it would be of the happiest consequence to the prosperity of the state, and the maintaining of civil liberty, to extend to their brethren, the Roman catholics, the RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE as fully as was compatible with the maintenance of the PROTESTANT GOVERNMENT.

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In an address to the people of Ireland, they propose the election of five delegates from each county, city, and considerable town, to meet in Dublin, October 25 next ensuing, in NATIONAL CONGRESS. On the 9th of August, resolutions nearly similar were agreed to at a general meeting of the freeholders of the county of Dublin; and a petition was also voted by them to the king for a dissolution of the present parliament. On application being made to the lord lieutenant to transmit these petitions to England, his grace without hesitation "declared it to be his duty so to do. At the same time he informed them that he should not fail to accompany them with his entire disapprobation, as they included unjust and indecent reflections upon the laws and the parliament of Ireland, and as they tended to foment fatal dissensions among the people."

The town of Belfast, distinguished much more for its zeal than its discretion in the cause of liberty, nearly at the same time voted a petition of a nature most extraordinary, and in the highest degree exceptionable, to the king, which they transmitted to Mr. Pitt, in order to its being presented by the minister to the sovereign. The prayer of the petition was, "That the king would be pleased to dissolve the present, and to issue the writs necessary for the assembling of a new parliament, ACCORDING to the PLAN of REPRESENTATION which should be agreed upon in the NATIONAL CONGRESS of the 25th of October." Mr. Pitt in reply very calmly and forcibly remarked, "That he had undoubtedly been and still continued a zealous friend to a reform in parliament, but he must beg leave to say that he had been so on grounds very different from those adopted in the petition. What was *there* proposed he considered as tending to produce still greater evils than any of those which the friends of reform were desirous to remedy. He had great concern in differing so widely on this subject from a body of men who professed to be guided by motives of loyalty and reverence for the constitution: but animated

mated himself by the same motives, and sincerely anxious for the prosperity and freedom of every part of the British empire, he had thought it his duty to communicate to them his sentiments with fairness and precision."

Conscious of its strength, notwithstanding the extreme unpopularity of its measures, the government of Ireland did not long content itself with a cold expression of disapprobation at the proceedings now in contemplation. The 20th of September had been fixed upon as the day for electing five delegates to represent the city of Dublin in NATIONAL CONGRESS. A short time previous to the intended meeting, Mr. Fitzgibbon, the attorney-general, wrote a letter to the sheriffs, "expressing his astonishment at having read a public summons signed by them for this purpose—and declaring them responsible for such outrageous breach of their duty to the laws of their country, and signifying his resolution to proceed officially against them." The sheriffs, in a consternation at this menace, refused to take any part in the business. After some embarrassment and delay, five delegates were nevertheless chosen, and a resolution passed, declaring the conduct of the attorney general to be a violation of magna charta. The attorney general, holding this resolution in contempt, actually filed informations against the high sheriffs of various counties, for convening and presiding at similar meetings. Notwithstanding all obstacles, the NATIONAL CONGRESS met on the 25th of October (1784). After a session of three days only, finding their numbers on the return very incomplete, they adjourned to the 20th of January 1785; having previously passed several resolutions, importing, that the appointment of that assembly, and the steps that had been taken, were in entire conformity with the constitution of Ireland.

On the same day commenced the second session of the parliament of Ireland; and in a short time Mr. Orde, secretary to the lord lieutenant, laid before the house in a  
series

series of propositions, the grand commercial regulations digested, during the recess, into a regular system. There were two plans obviously and radically different, on which a permanent arrangement might be formed on the basis of equality—1. A system of mutual prohibition. 2. A system of mutual admission. The propositions, eleven in number, moved by Mr. Orde, were framed in conformity to the latter, and beyond comparison the wiser of these opposite systems.

An arrangement founded on the basis of mutual prohibition, or, in the more favorite and fashionable language of *protecting duties*, would have been fatal to the great staple manufactory of LINENS imported into England, not only duty-free, but with the positive advantage of a bounty. On the system of prohibition Ireland would have been totally deprived of the colonial traffic; and the city of Cork, the emporium of the kingdom, and the grand mart of the West Indian and victualling trade, would have been precipitated from the height of prosperity into the depth of distress and ruin. It would have amounted to a virtual declaration of national enmity and hostility; and there was good reason to fear lest Ireland should have sunk under the weight of so unequal and dangerous a competition. On the other hand, the system of amicable equalization was open to very plausible and even serious objections.

Such was the prodigious inferiority of Ireland in almost every branch of traffic, that were the high prohibitory importation duties repealed by England, there was but little ground to hope that Ireland would for many years to come find herself materially or sensibly benefited. It was urged by Mr. Flood and other members in the opposition, that the greater object was now about to be sacrificed to the less; Ireland had asked for bread, and England had given her a stone; she had asked for *protecting duties*, and she was offered equalization; amid a parade of concession



cession the real *desideratum* was withheld. This might be compared to the procedure of a certain company of strolling players, who advertised the tragedy of Hamlet, in which the part of Hamlet was by particular desire to be omitted. By the proposed regulations Ireland was indeed at liberty to send her woollens to Leeds and Halifax, and her coals to Sunderland and Newcastle. England would not suffer, even under the new system, the exportation of her raw wool to Ireland; but then Ireland was at liberty, when the quality of her wool was improved, and the price lowered, to retaliate, by prohibiting the exportation of Irish wool to England—and this was called equality. The starving woollen manufacturer of Ireland was in the mean time left to perish; and if he presumed to complain, he was told that he ought to rest satisfied, for that the linen manufacture would under the new system flourish more than ever.

By the last proposition it was resolved, "that whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of the kingdom should produce above the amount of the regular peace establishment, should be appropriated towards the support of the naval force of the EMPIRE, in such manner as the parliament of Ireland shall direct." This was inveighed against as a palpable collusion—an artifice by which a revenue was to be raised in Ireland, to be afterwards applied to the advantage of Great Britain. Had England, it was asked, ever entered into a war on the account of Ireland? Had she ever equipped a ship more than she would have done had Ireland been sunk into the abysses of the ocean? Were Ireland entirely independent of and unconnected with England, it was forcibly asserted that the minister who should form a treaty of commerce with England on the foundation of these resolutions, would deserve to be impeached for sacrificing the essential interests of Ireland. In the heat and passion of debate, it was affirmed to be fortunate for Mr. Orde that he was at present in a civilized

lized country; had he brought forward his plan in a Polish diet, he would not have lived to carry back his answer.

Notwithstanding these reasonings and invectives, the good sense and moderation of the house were well satisfied with the concessions made by England, so far surpassing what the most sanguine expectation a few years since could have ventured to indulge. The propositions were received not only with approbation, but with joyful applause, and were ultimately ratified by a very decisive majority of the house. In the mean time the NATIONAL CONGRESS had continued its sittings almost unregarded. In a brief and final address to the people of Ireland, this assembly observed, "that if the abuses of former parliaments did not inspire a distrust of those which were to come—if the venerable opinion of those illustrious men who were now no more, and the assistance of those whose present labors co-operated with them in the same pursuit, had no influence to awaken their fears, to animate their efforts, and to invigorate their hopes, this and every other endeavor must sink into oblivion; and they would shortly repose in indolent acquiescence, under such a representation as would gall themselves and their posterity with increasing taxes and oppressions."

After long delay Mr. Flood, on the 12th of May (1785), presented once more his bill for effecting a reform in the representation, somewhat varied from that of the last year. A previous motion of the same senator, "that it be an instruction to the committee appointed to prepare the bill, that no borough in the province of Connaught having less than forty, or in the other provinces having less than seventy electors, should be permitted to return more than one member to parliament," was negatived without a division. On the introduction of the bill Mr. Brownlow observed, "that he greatly doubted indeed whether there was virtue enough in that house to pass the bill;

bill; but whatever might be its fate, he would be bold to affirm, that sooner or later the reform so repeatedly denied **WOULD** and **MUST** be given." Mr. Flood remarked, "that when his first bill of reform was presented to that house, the objection was, that it was presented on the point of a bayonet—the *air drawn-dagger* of Macbeth had appeared to the affrightened imagination and conscience of the house. These apprehensions had at length subsided; a more favorable treatment might now therefore be reasonably expected. At least he called on the house to permit the printing of the bill, that the voice of the public might be heard respecting it; and not, like mutes in a *seraglio*, to strangle it on that day while in the act of challenging a fair and free trial and discussion." The bill was nevertheless with little ceremony rejected, on a division of 112 to 60 voices.

It is now proper to revert to the state of affairs in England. On the 24th of January (1785) the session was opened with a speech from the throne, the principal feature of which was the recommendation of the king to the two houses of parliament, "to apply their earnest attention to the adjustment of such points in the commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland as are not yet finally arranged." The first business which attracted the notice of the house of commons was the state of the Westminster scrutiny, which had now existed for a period of eight months. In this time two parishes only had been scrutinized—the result was, that 105 votes had been struck off the poll of Mr. Fox, and 87 from that of sir Cecil Wray, the examination of which was not yet closed. Fifteen parishes more remained for future investigation, so that there existed but little apparent probability that the question relative to the return would be decided before the next general election. The miserable imbecility of what was now for the first time dignified by the appellation of the **COURT OF SCRUTINY**, was exposed  
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in the most sarcastic and contemptuous terms. The high bailiff had no power to summon witnesses, to impose an oath, or to commit for contumacy. The scrutiny was evidently a mere personal act of revision, and the high bailiff himself declared that he acted under the sole authority of the resolution of that house.

Mr. Pitt, however, condescended to vindicate the proceedings of this mock judicature, and maintained with unaltered countenance, "that the expediency of the scrutiny was amply justified by the experiment." Mr. Fox, with generous and indignant warmth, replied, "that he well remembered the day when he congratulated the house on the acquisition of Mr. Pitt's splendid abilities; it had been his pride to fight in conjunction with him the battles of the constitution; he had been ever ready to recognize in the right hon. gentleman a formidable rival, who would leave him far behind in the pursuit of glory—but he had never expected that this rival would become his persecutor. He thought he had possessed an elevation of mind wholly incompatible with so low and grovelling a passion. He considered the present measure with regard to Westminster, as a *succedaneum* to expulsion. The case of the Middlesex election, so much reprobated, had at least the merit of being more manly; for the procedure now adopted accomplished the same end of expulsion, without daring to exhibit any charge against the person expelled."

The motion of Mr. Welbore Ellis, "that the high bailiff do attend at the bar of this house," was at length negatived, February 9, (1785) by a majority of 174 to 135 voices. This being such a majority as by no means discouraged future efforts, a similar motion was soon after made by colonel Fitzpatrick; this was negatived by a majority of nine voices only. And on the 3d of March, being a third time repeated by Alderman Sawbridge it was carried in the affirmative, yeas 162, noes 124; leaving

ing the minister, and the veteran phalanx of courtiers and *king's friends*, in one of the most disgraceful minorities ever known in the British house of commons.

Mr. Fox now as member for Westminster moved to expunge the resolutions of the 8th of June last, relative to this business, from the journals of the house; but the minister, now seriously alarmed, summoned all his strength to oppose this attempt to redeem the honor of the house thus willfully and wantonly degraded; and on a division it was carried in the negative, ayes 139, noes 244. Fortunately for Mr. Pitt, the public attention was quickly turned to another and higher subject of political discussion, in which he appeared in a light far different—such indeed as tended to revive in his favor all the former flattering prepossessions of those who viewed the late proceedings in parliament with inexpressible regret and astonishment.

On the 18th of April (1785) Mr. Pitt brought forward his final plan for a reform in the representation, in some degree varying from his preceding attempts, and in all respects guarded, temperate, and judicious. “He rose, he said, with hopes infinitely more sanguine than he had ventured to entertain at any former period. There never was a moment when the minds of men were more enlightened on this interesting topic, or more prepared for its discussion. He declared his present plan of reform to be perfectly coincident with the spirit of those changes which had taken place in the exercise of the elective franchise from the earliest ages, and not in the least allied to the *spirit of innovation*. So far back as the reign of Edward I. before which the component orders of the representative body could not be distinctly traced, the franchise of election had been constantly fluctuating. As one borough decayed and another flourished, the first was abolished and the second invested with the right. Even the representation of the counties had not been uniform. King James I. in his first proclamation for calling a parliament,

liament, directed that the sheriffs should not call upon such decayed and ruined boroughs to send members to that parliament. For this discretion, as vested in the crown, he was certainly no advocate; but he wished to establish a permanent rule to operate like the discretion out of which the constitution had sprung—that the principle on which it was founded should be rescued from the accident and caprice in which it was unhappily involved. He wished to bring forward a plan that should be complete, gradual, and permanent; a plan that not only corrected the inequalities of the present system, but which would be competent to preserve the purity it restored, and give to the constitution not only consistency, but, if possible, immortality. It was his design that the actual number of the house of commons should be preserved inviolate. His immediate object was to select a certain number of the decayed and rotten boroughs, the right of representation attached to thirty-six of which should be transferred to the counties, in such proportions as the wisdom of parliament might prescribe; and that all unnecessary harshness might be avoided, he recommended the appropriation of a fund of one million to be applied to the purchasing of the franchise of such boroughs, on their voluntary application to parliament. When this was effected, he proposed to extend the bill to the purchasing the franchise of other boroughs, besides the original thirty-six; and to transfer the right of returning members to large towns, hitherto unrepresented, upon their petitioning parliament to be indulged with this privilege.”

The other most important particulars of Mr. Pitt's plan were the admitting of copyholders to an equality with freeholders, and the extending the franchise in populous towns, where the electors were few, to the inhabitants in general. The result of this plan was to give one hundred members to the popular interest in the kingdom, and to extend the right of election to one hundred thousand

land persons, who, by the existing provisions of the law, were excluded from it. This was a very wise and excellently digested plan, which did great honor to the framer; and the eloquence, ability, and vigor, with which it was supported, left no reasonable ground of doubt as to the sincerity with which it was brought forward.

The most important animadversion in the course of the debate to which this motion gave rise, was made by Mr. Fox, who, justly remarking "that government was not a property, but a trust," strongly objected to the idea of purchasing franchises of boroughs, which from their insignificance were no longer entitled to send members to parliament—"whatever was given for constitutional purposes should be resumed when those purposes were no longer answered." With this and some other less important exceptions, Mr. Fox bestowed upon the plan of the minister a very just and liberal tribute of praise; and it yet remains a doubt, whether, upon the ground of *expediency*, Mr. Pitt was not fully justified in proposing that regulation which the more unaccommodating and decided policy of Mr. Fox disdained to approve.

On the other hand, the whole plan was reprobated and ridiculed by Mr. Powys, as "the mere knight-errantry of a political Quixote. It was an example, a precedent, an incitement, to the wildest and most paradoxical *nostrums* that speculative theorists could devise. They got by it what Archimedes wanted—a foundation for their inventions—a *fulcrum* from which they could throw the parliament and constitution of England into the air. He could not contemplate it with any degree of patience. He should not treat it, therefore, with the ceremony of calling for the order of the day; but as its purposes were so hostile to the constitution, so menacing and unqualified, he would meet the question in front by giving it a direct and unequivocal contradiction. It cannot be supposed, owing to the superior force of such arguments as these, that on a division,

division, after a long-protracted debate, the bill was rejected by a majority of 248 to 174 voices.

In consequence of the very able reports presented from time to time by the commissioners of accounts appointed by act of parliament, Mr. Pitt in the course of the present session brought in three several bills, for the better auditing and examining the public accounts, and for the regulation and reform of the public offices, which passed both houses with much applause, and no material opposition. The balances of the navy and ordnance offices were by these bills ordered, as those of the paymaster of the forces by a former regulation, to be paid into the bank. The antient mode of proceeding by the auditors of the imprest was abolished as wholly frivolous and nugatory, though the perquisites of the auditors were estimated at no less than 34,000*l.* annually in times of peace, and during the war they had risen to a height incredibly enormous. A new and efficient commission of examination and control was instituted; many of the inferior departments of office, or heads of service, were consolidated; and the whole now assumed the appearance of a regular and rational system.

The remaining part of the floating arrear of debt, consisting of navy bills and ordnance debentures, was now funded on five per cent. stock; and the interest, amounting to above four hundred thousand pounds per annum, was provided by fresh taxes; one of which, a tax on retail shops calculated at one hundred and twenty thousand pounds per annum, proved singularly obnoxious. It was said to be, under a new denomination, neither more nor less than a partial house tax; and the whole body of retail traders were universally agreed, that it was utterly impracticable, for obvious reasons, to indemnify themselves by raising the price of their different commodities upon the consumer. By way of recompense or *douceur* to the shopkeeper, Mr. Pitt proposed, by a deed of unprecedented oppression,



oppression, proceeding certainly from prejudice or inattention rather than any fixed malignity of design, to revoke and take away the licence from all *hawkers and pedlars*, whom he styled "a pest to the community, and a nursery and medium for the preservation of illicit trade." That this class of traders were engaged in, and derived their chief support from illicit practices, was a very heavy and serious charge, and ought to have been clearly proved at the bar of the house, in order to have justified a measure of such unexampled severity, and of a nature so highly penal. Far from being the *pests* of society, an impartial and disinterested person can discern in these itinerant traders, only an industrious class of men, who pursue an occupation perfectly innocent in itself, and highly useful to the inhabitants of small towns and villages, who would otherwise find it difficult to procure the various articles of merchandize with which they are thus occasionally supplied. Upon what principle of equity or justice any government could exercise the power of preventing these people from enjoying the fruits of their honest labor, and of devoting them to remediless ruin, it is surely difficult, or rather impossible, to discover.

Mr. Fox, struck with the inhumanity and utter indefensibility of the proposed regulation, generously and powerfully pleaded, in conjunction with Mr. Dempster, Mr. Courtney and other gentlemen, though with very incomplete success, in behalf of this friendless and unprotected description of men. In the result, the prohibition was changed to a heavy duty, which combined with other severe restrictions would, *it was hoped*, effect the same ultimate purpose. "Had we been informed," says a very intelligent and truly philanthropic writer (lord Gardenstone,) speaking of this prohibitory regulation, "that Nadir Sha, or any other oriental despot, had invented a tax for the purpose of exterminating the object of it, we should naturally have exclaimed, that this was the extre-

mity of oppression." The principle of this bill was in the course of the debate truly affirmed by Mr. Dempster to be no less iniquitous than that of the expulsion of the moriscos from Spain, or of the huguenots from France.

But the subject which chiefly engaged the attention of parliament during the present session was the projected plan of commercial intercourse with Ireland. In the opening of this important business, Mr. Pitt made some excellent observations on "the species of policy which had been long exercised by the English government in regard to Ireland, the object of which was, to debar her from the enjoyment and use of her own resources, and to make her completely subservient to the interest and opulence of this country. Some relaxation of this system had taken place indeed at an early period of the present century;—more had been done in the reign of king George II. but it was not till within a very few years that the system had been completely reversed. Still however the future intercourse between the two kingdoms remained for legislative wisdom to arrange; and the PROPOSITIONS moved by Mr. Orde in the Irish parliament, and ratified by that assembly, held out, he said, a system liberal, beneficial, and permanent†.

IF

† These famous propositions, eleven in number, were in purport and substance, and divested of their technical form, as follows:

I. That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is highly important to the general interest of the British empire, that the trade between Great Britain and Ireland be encouraged and extended as much as possible, and for that purpose, that the intercourse and commerce be finally settled and regulated on permanent and equitable principles for the mutual benefit of both countries.

II. That all articles, *not* the growth or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, should be imported into each kingdom from the other, reciprocally, at the same duties to which they are liable when imported directly from the place of their product; and that all duties originally paid on the importation into either country respectively, shall be fully drawn back on exportation to the other.

III. That no prohibition should exist in either country against the importation of any article of the other, and that the duty on importation should be precisely the same in both countries, except where an addition may be necessary in consequence of an internal duty on any such article of its own consumption.

IV. That where the duties on articles of the product of either country are different on the importation into the other, they should be reduced where

If the question should be asked, whether, under the accumulation of our heavy taxes, it would be wise to equalize the duties, and to enable a country free from those taxes to meet us in their own market and in ours, he would answer, that Ireland, with an independent legislature, would no longer submit to be treated with inferiority. A great and generous effort was to be made by this country, and we were to choose between inevitable alternatives. Our manufactures however were so decidedly superior to theirs, that the immunities proposed would be in fact, and for many years to come, productive of little alteration. It

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where they are highest to the amount payable in the other; and that all such articles should be exportable from the kingdom into which they shall be imported as free from duty, as the similar commodities or home manufacture of the same kingdom.

V. That in all cases where either kingdom shall charge articles of its own consumption with an internal duty; the same articles, when imported from the other, may be charged with a duty adequate to countervail the internal duty.

VI. That no prohibition or new duty shall hereafter be imposed in either kingdom on the *importation* of any article the product of the other, except such additional duties as may be requisite to countervail the duties on internal consumption.

VII. That no prohibitions or new duties shall be hereafter imposed on the *exportation* of any article of native growth, except such as either kingdom may think expedient from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuit; and also, except where there now exists any prohibition not reciprocal, or duty not equal; in every such case, the prohibition may be made reciprocal, or the duties raised so as to make them equal.

VIII. That no bounties whatever should be payable in either kingdom on the exportation of any article to the other, except such as relate to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits, and such as are in the nature of drawbacks or compensation for duties paid; and that no bounty should be granted in Ireland on the exportation of any article imported from the British plantations, unless in cases where a similar bounty is payable in Britain; or where such bounty is merely in the nature of a drawback or compensation for duties paid internally, over and above any duties paid thereon in Britain.

IX. That the importation of articles from foreign states should be regulated in each kingdom, so as to afford an effectual preference to similar articles of the growth and produce of the other.

X. That it is essential to the commercial interests of Ireland, to prevent as much as possible an accumulation of national debt; that therefore it is highly expedient that the annual revenue of this kingdom shall be made equal to its annual expence.

XI. That whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of the kingdom, after deducting all drawbacks, repayments, or bounties granted in the nature of drawbacks, shall produce above the sum of six hundred and fifty-six thousand pounds in each year of peace, wherein the annual revenue shall equal the annual expence, and in each year of war, without regard to such equality, should be appropriated towards the support of the naval force of the empire, in such manner as the parliament of Ireland shall direct.

would require time for the acquisition of both capital and skill; and as these increased, the difference between the price of labor there and in this country would be incessantly diminishing. After all, there might, he admitted, be some branches of manufacture in which Ireland might rival and perhaps excel England. But this ought not to give us pain. We must calculate from general and not from partial views. Above all, we should learn not to regard Ireland with an eye of jealousy. It required little philosophy to reconcile us to a competition which would give us a rich customer instead of a poor one. The prosperity of the sister kingdom would be a fresh and inexhaustible source of opulence to us."

These comprehensive and liberal ideas, so opposite to the wisdom and policy of past ages, were on this great and interesting occasion received by the British house of commons with general complacency and approbation, and by the public at large with apparent tranquillity and acquiescence. The vastness of the plan, and the multiplicity and complexity of the objects which it embraced, seemed to keep the public mind in a kind of suspense; and for near a month after its first introduction, there were no indications discernible of serious or determined opposition. Mr. Fox, indeed, at the onset of the business, commenced the attack, by sarcastically observing, that by far the greater part of Mr. Pitt's speech was little else than a reply to that of Mr. Orde in the Irish house of commons. In Ireland, the propositions had been stated as in the highest degree advantageous to that country; as rendering it the emporium of Europe, and the source and supply of the British markets. Here the great recommendation of the system was, that the benefits accruing to Ireland were, if not wholly visionary, at best trivial and remote;—that Ireland could not rival England;—that she was poor and feeble, and would very long in all probability remain so. He must, however, do Mr. Orde the justice to acknowledge, that

that his arguments were far the most solid and convincing. As to the report of the privy council, to whom the consideration of this business had been previously referred, Mr. Fox remarked, " that a question which appeared to him of primary importance had been entirely overlooked by them ; he meant the propriety and policy of permitting the produce of Africa and America to be brought into Great Britain through Ireland. By this measure, we threw down the whole fabric of our navigation laws. The period was not very distant when the charter of the East India company would expire ; and, according to the tenor of the resolutions now proposed, there remained no power in this country to renew it with the same, or indeed any exclusive privileges. Mr. Fox censured the precipitancy with which this business was urged, and contended for the necessity of calling the merchants and manufacturers to the bar of the house, in order that the house might be fully informed in a case of this momentous nature, before they proceeded to vote a definitive resolution.

On the 14th of March, Mr. Eden moved, that the commissioners of customs and excise should be examined at the bar of the house ; which was carried in the affirmative.

On the same day, a petition was presented by Mr. Stanley, member for Lancashire, from the manufacturers of that county, praying to be heard by counsel against the bill. Petitions were likewise presented from Liverpool, Glasgow, and Manchester. The malign spirit of commercial jealousy appeared to be at length thoroughly awakened, and petitions upon petitions were sent up to parliament, in incredible numbers, from every quarter of the kingdom. At the end of a long and tedious investigation of facts and examination of witnesses, Mr. Pitt was reluctantly compelled to acknowledge the necessity of making some material alterations and amendments in his original plan.

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On the 12th of May 1785, Mr. Pitt brought forward, in consequence of the additional lights thus thrown upon the business, a series of propositions, so altered, modified, and enlarged as to exhibit in its new form what might well be considered as a new system.

Mr. Fox, in the language of triumph, congratulated the house on the happy escape they had made from the system proposed by the chancellor of the exchequer but two months since; all opposition to which was then treated as the effect of faction and disappointment. "If," said Mr. Fox, "the original resolutions had passed, we should have lost for ever the monopoly of the East India trade; we must have hazarded all the revenue arising from spiritous liquors; we should have sacrificed the whole of the navigation laws of this country. If these resolutions had passed into a law, we should have risked the loss of the Colonial market for the manufactures of Great Britain, and incurred the most extensive danger to the colonies themselves; we should have left it in the power of Ireland to have drawn a revenue from our consumption. The just alarm of the minister on the subject of the navigation laws," Mr. Fox said, "sufficiently appeared from the extraordinary nature of the remedy he had thought it expedient to adopt, which was no other than to assert that, notwithstanding the independence of Ireland, she must still in commercial laws and external legislation be governed by Britain." Mr. Fox affirmed, "that the wild scheme of extravagant speculation comprized in the resolutions, did not originate with the Irish nation. A stranger had been sent thither to offer a *nostrum* of his own invention for the relief of a disordered state. For the irritation and ill humour existing in that country, ministers were responsible. The violences which they committed in Ireland merited the most decisive and general reprobation. Their attacks on the liberty of the press;—their endeavours to prevent legal meetings, for the purpose of deliberating

rating on the best means of reforming the national representation ;—their proceedings against men by summary attachment, were measures which might well be supposed to inflame the minds of the people of Ireland. Now imprudent insult was to be compensated by imprudent concession. But let the house beware of a design so insidious and ruinous as that of a commutation of English commerce for Irish slavery. The propositions, as they were even now modified, were far too complicated and extensive to be voted by the majority of the members of that house, on any other ground than that of confidence in the minister : and surely the right honourable gentleman had sufficiently demonstrated, that implicit confidence in him was as dangerous as it was absurd ; that infallibility was no more his prerogative, than that of the rest of the world." The house at length divided on the motion of adjournment, ayes, 155, noes 281 ; and at eight o'clock in the morning, the first resolution, broken into two distinct propositions in the new arrangement, passed the house. The remaining resolutions were subsequently carried after an obstinate contest ; and on the 30th of May they were carried up to the house of lords.

Here they were again the subject of long and laborious investigation ; in the course of which the lords Stormont and Loughborough chiefly distinguished themselves on the part of opposition. Various amendments, though not of very material import, were offered and received by the house. In the progress of the business, the earl of Shelburne, recently created marquis of Lansdowne, made a remarkable speech, which, though not unfavorable to the measure before the house, clearly manifested how little cordiality subsisted between that nobleman and the present minister, notwithstanding their former intimate political connection ;—so frail are the friendships and so transient the attachments of statesmen !—The marquis entered into a very masterly survey of the construction and general effect of the proposed

posed arrangement. He declared "the result of his enquiry to be very opposite to that of the merchants and manufacturers, however respectable, who had been examined at their lordship's bar. Though much valuable information might doubtless be derived from their evidence, it must not be forgotten that they were men peculiarly subject to prejudice and error; in all cases where their personal interest was concerned. Were any one, for instance, to ask a manufacturer of Halifax, what was the greatest crime upon earth? was it felony, was it murder, was it parricide?" he would answer, 'no—none of these; it was the exporting of wool.\* His lordship declared himself of opinion, that the unlimited commerce of Ireland, would not create a formidable competition to England. Ireland, destitute as she was of the grand materials for ship-building, timber and iron, was incapable of the carrying trade, and had little capital. These were disadvantages not to be easily or speedily surmounted. The noble lord said, he was himself recently arrived from the groves of Bowood, and had not entered into any accurate or minute investigation of this business. But ministers must have been lost in the most criminal insatiation, if they had not prepared this great system with due and proper deliberation—if they had not made themselves masters of its bearings and tendencies. He placed the utmost reliance on the integrity and abilities of *the nobleman now at the head of affairs in Ireland and on those of his secretary*. He was certain *they* would not disgrace themselves in a transaction to which they were in every respect equal.

Delay

\* When the famous Colbert applied to the principal merchants in France, to know what regulations would be best calculated to improve the manufactures and extend the commerce of the kingdom, the answer he obtained from them was, "*laissez nous faire*,"—let us alone. Nevertheless, that great minister, who saw things, not through the distorted medium of personal interest, but with the clear discernment and comprehensive beneficence of a statesman and a patriot, is now universally allowed, by his "wild and visionary speculations," as they were then doubtless styled, to have laid the foundation of the commercial grandeur and prosperity of France.



Delay he knew to be dangerous; something decisive must be done. If this were not the proper measure, what was to be substituted? Plausible objections might no doubt be adduced. It might be urged, that the present system would be acceptable in neither kingdom;—that the author of it was too young, and was ignorant of what should constitute a minister;—that if others more competent to this task had remained longer in office, things would have been better and more satisfactorily settled. It might be said, ‘how, in the name of God, did this man contrive to elevate himself to the rank of a minister?’ We must however take things as we found them. The most serious interests of both countries were at stake, and the most alarming consequences might attend the postponement of this business.”

The Irish resolutions were sent down from the lords to the commons the 29th of July 1785. After much fresh and eager debate, the amendments of their lordships were agreed to by the commons; and on the 28th of July, an address was presented to the king by both houses of parliament, acquainting his majesty with the steps which had been taken in this affair; adding, “that it remained for the parliament of Ireland to judge of the conditions according to their wisdom and discretion, as well as of every other part of the settlement proposed to be established by mutual consent.” The two houses now adjourned themselves to a distant day; and on the 30th of September 1785, the parliament was prorogued by royal proclamation.

The amended propositions having been transmitted to Ireland, Mr. Orde, on the 12th of August, moved for leave to bring in a bill for establishing the system of commercial intercourse therein contained. This minister defended the variations that now appeared, by alleging the natural progress of a measure of this nature. Ireland had, in the early part of the sessions, stated what she had

had thought herself entitled to claim, and Britain in return had declared what she was willing to concede. Mr. Orde averred, that the amendments made by the British parliament to the original propositions did not in reality interfere with the prosperity of Ireland. Wishing, however, to follow the example of mature deliberation given by England, it was his intention, after bringing in the bill and printing it, to pause, in order to learn the sentiments of the country respecting it. Let the house receive every petition that could be brought; let them listen to all the evidence that could be offered. On a comparison of the two sets of propositions, the magnitude and importance of the alterations strikingly appeared. By the third of the English resolutions, Ireland was virtually interdicted, even after the expiration of the charter of the East India company, from exporting articles to England the growth and produce of any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the straits of Magellan. By the same resolution, this interdiction was extended to arrack and foreign brandy; also to rums and other strong waters not imported from the British colonies in the West Indies. By the fourth resolution, it was declared to be highly essential that the laws for regulating trade and navigation should be the same in both countries; and, for that purpose, that all laws which have been made, OR SHALL BE MADE in Great Britain, securing exclusive privileges to the ships and mariners of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British colonies and plantations, and for regulating and restraining the trade of the British colonies and plantations, such laws imposing the same restraints, and conferring the same benefits on the subjects of both kingdoms, should be in force in Ireland, BY LAWS to be passed by the PARLIAMENT of that kingdom, for the SAME TIME and in the SAME MANNER as in GREAT BRITAIN. By the fifth resolution, this legislative power of regulation and control was in like manner extended to all goods and commodities

commodities imported into Ireland from the British or foreign colonies in Africa and America. By the sixth and seventh resolutions, the commercial intercourse between the two kingdoms was incumbered with many burdensome and rigorous regulations respecting bonds, cockets, certificates, &c. in order effectually to repress all illicit practices apprehended from the circuitous commerce granted to Ireland. By the eighth, the regulating power of Britain is extended to all goods exported from Ireland to the British colonies in the West Indies, America, or the coast of Africa. By the ninth, Ireland is excluded, so long as the charter of the East India company shall exist, from trading to any port beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the straits of Magellan; and during the continuance of the said charter, no goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of India shall be allowed to be imported into Ireland but through Great Britain. By the fifteenth resolution, the bounties allowed by Great Britain on the exportation of beer to Ireland, and spirits distilled from corn, are expressly continued. By the sixteenth, it is provided, that all goods the produce of the North American states, which are subject to higher duties on importation into Great Britain, than the like goods the produce of the British colonies—such articles shall be subject to the same duties on importation into Ireland.

These were the grand and leading features of difference between the old propositions and the new: and so great was the dissimilarity, that the Irish parliament seemed scarcely to recognize the traces of its own original creation. A general sentiment of amazement and indignation seemed to pervade the house; and the FOURTH RESOLUTION in particular, by which England assumed a power of legislative regulation and commercial control with respect to Ireland, was rejected with a kind of horror.

Mr. Grattan, who had supported the propositions in their primitive form, now exerted the whole force of his eloquence

eloquence to expose them to public scorn and detestation. "What," said this powerful orator, "is this pretended equitable arrangement but a plan to perpetuate to England all her advantages, and to Ireland all her disadvantages? Ireland is required to grant a monopoly of the trade of India to the present East India company during its existence, and to Great Britain for ever after. This is not a surrender of the political rights of the country, but of the natural prerogatives of man—not of the privileges of parliament, but of the rights of nations. They were not to sail beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan—an awful interdict! other interdicts extended to a determined period of time, but here was an eternity of restraint. Other interdicts extended to particular places, for local reasons—but here regions of immense extent were indiscriminately forbidden, and the bounties which providence had given they were prohibited to enjoy. It resembled a judgment of God, rather than an act of legislature, whether they measured it by extent of space, or infinity of duration—and had nothing human about it except its presumption. The principle of equal duties and equal restrictions," Mr. Grattan said, "did not constitute an equality of participation, because the condition of the two countries was totally dissimilar. Supposing Great Britain, in order to answer the exigency of some future war, or to fund her present debt, should raise her colony duties still higher; Ireland must follow, not because she wanted the tax, but lest her exemption from taxes should give her manufactures any comparative advantage. Irish taxes were to be precautions against the prosperity of Irish manufactures. Nay, worse than this; the propositions in question would make English jealousy the barometer of Irish taxes. The exclusion of foreign plantation produce would have seemed sufficient for every purpose of power and dominion; but, for the purpose of aggravation and insult, the independent states of America were

were most ungraciously brought into the arrangement, and expressly named as if North America continued a part of the British dominions. This was called a system of concession and compensation; but," said Mr. Grattan, "the people of Ireland, *without* compensation, obtained a colony trade, a free trade, the government of their army, the extinction of the unconstitutional powers of the council, the restoration of the judicature of their lords, and finally, the independence of their legislature. Let them see now what they obtain *by* compensation:—A covenant not to trade beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the straits of Magellan;—a covenant not to take foreign plantation produce,—not to take American produce but as Great Britain shall permit;—a covenant not to take British plantation produce but as Great Britain should prescribe;—a covenant never to protect their own manufactures, never to guard the *primum* of those manufactures. Surely some God presided over the welfare of Ireland, who made it wisdom to fulfil their duty, and who annexed the penalties of folly as well as infamy to the surrender of their privileges. From the consideration of commerce," said this animated orator, "I proceed to a question much more high and inestimable—before which the ideas of protecting duties, of reciprocal duties, of countervailing duties, vanish into nothing; and by the tendencies of which, the prudence of every head and the energies of every heart are called forth to shield the newly-acquired rights of a nation so long depressed, and so recently and wonderfully emancipated. If any body of men could think the Irish constitution incompatible with the unity of the British empire, a doctrine which he abjured as sedition against both, he would answer, 'perish the empire, live the constitution!' No transfer of legislative authority could be made. They, the limited trustees of delegated power, born for a particular purpose, confined to a particular line, and bearing an inviolable relationship to the people who sent

sent them to parliament, could not break that relationship, counteract that purpose, and surrender, diminish, or derogate from those privileges they lived but to preserve. The propositions granted a perpetual money bill—a money bill to continue as long as Great Britain shall please, with a covenant to increase it as often as she shall require. The trade and the purse of the nation were alike in covenant. Pass this bill, and they had no constituents; their constituents had no representatives:—they were the mere register of the British parliament, and the equalizer of British duties. But have you traced the map of the globe? Have you marked there the countries, the right of trading to which you are to surrender for ever? Have you surveyed the settlements of the several European nations in Asia, in Africa, in America? Have you considered the state of North America—its present situation, its future growth, and every incident in the endless succession of time that may attend that nurse of commerce and ASYLUM of MANKIND? Are you competent to declare, that a free trade to those vast regions will never in the efflux of time tend to the advancement of the interests of Ireland? If you possess satisfactory information upon this subject, it must be by inspiration, not by knowledge.—Let us then guard our free trade and free constitution as our only real resources. They are the result of great virtue, of much perseverance, and the source to this house of immortal honor. Let us preserve uncontaminated to the latest generations the dignity of parliament, the majesty of the people, and the imperial sovereignty of the Irish crown and nation.” The feelings of the parliament and of the people of Ireland were on this subject in perfect unison. Scarcely could the great and acknowledged talents of Mr. Fitzgibbon obtain him any share of attention when he rose to speak in vindication of a measure so supremely obnoxious. “If England relaxed her navigation laws in favor of Ireland, she had a right, Mr. Fitzgibbon affirmed, to expect to be followed by her in a code of laws which had been  
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the source of her commercial opulence, and the basis of her maritime strength. It had been insinuated, that they could trade to more advantage with the colonies of foreign states. But what foreign states would allow them to trade with their colonies? Who was to protect them if foreign states refused to do them justice? or who was to assert their rights, supposing them to be violated? When an arrangement so advantageous was offered to Ireland, for what reason was it that she hesitated and demurred? Because she is told that the treaty struck at the independence of her legislature. But it is as an independent power that Ireland has negotiated. It is as to an independent power that the overtures of Britain are made. An arrangement of trade could not be agreed upon between two nations, unless they settled at the same time principles of mutual restriction; and if the Irish nation would never condescend to promise compliance with any condition of a treaty, she must determine never to make any commercial treaty, or any treaty whatever." Mr. Fitzgibbon concluded a most able speech, by remarking, "that whatever might have been intimated concerning the possibility of Ireland standing alone; he was convinced, that, situated as she was in the neighbourhood of powerful popish countries, with a great majority of her people of the popish religion, she could not exist one hour as a protestant state if the protection of England were withdrawn." After a vehement debate, in which both parties exerted their utmost ability and eloquence, the house divided at nine in the morning upon the motion of Mr. Orde for leave to bring in the bill, ayes 127, noes 108. Such a division in the first stage of the business was equivalent to a defeat: and on the Monday following, Mr. Orde moved the first reading of the bill and the printing it; declaring, that he did not intend to make any further progress in the business during the present session. He had completed his duty respecting it. If it were revived, it must be by a motion from the public,

lic, who at the commencement of the ensuing session might take such further steps as they thought proper.

In order to preclude a motion of censure framed by Mr. Flood, the secretary then moved an adjournment; and Mr. Flood consenting, not without difficulty, to wave his motion, the adjournment was carried without a division. Public illuminations testified the joy excited by the sudden termination of this extraordinary business; and from this period, no effort has been made in either kingdom to revive in any shape this important and interesting discussion.

Upon the whole, though it might perhaps justly be regarded as too daring an experiment, the probability is, that a commercial treaty founded on the basis of the original propositions would have proved very beneficial in practice. The prodigious inferiority of skill, of credit, and of capital, must have effectually prevented Ireland from becoming formidable as a competitor to England; and in proportion as Ireland advanced in opulence, her artificial wants would have increased, and consequently her consumption of British manufactures and commodities.

Notwithstanding the great alarm excited when the first commercial concessions were made to Ireland, no detriment was in fact sustained by Great Britain: on the contrary, the trade to England continued rapidly to increase, even in regard to those very articles which Ireland was allowed to import from the place of their growth and produce. From the year 1781 to the year 1784 Muscovado sugars imported from the West Indies rose from 7,384 cwt. to 27,492 cwt.; and in the same term sugars imported from Britain rose from 130,056 to 160,083 cwt. Another remarkable fact is, that the linen manufacture both in England and Scotland has flourished with constant and regular acceleration, notwithstanding the unlimited competition of the Irish nation. According to a seven years average ending A. D. 1755, not more than 576,373 yards were exported from England; and in the year 1771 the export



export amounted to no less than 4,411,040 yards. Why then might not a similar competition be as safely and advantageously established in other branches of commerce? These arithmetical statements shew to a demonstration the extreme weakness and futility of those fears and apprehensions which are so apt to agitate the mercantile world at the slightest breath of innovation, and their total incompetency to deduce, from a comprehensive and impartial survey of the whole system, just and accurate conclusions. Considering, nevertheless, the narrow limits of the highest human sagacity, it must be acknowledged that prudence would have dictated a temporary duration to this commercial arrangement, in order to bring the utility of it to the infallible touchstone of experience. As to the fourth proposition of the English series, which was the immediate cause of the positive and peremptory rejection of the whole, it might in all probability have been very safely dispensed with, as there is no reason to doubt but that Ireland would have spontaneously adopted with good-faith and good-will any regulations necessary to enforce a treaty which she found upon the whole conducive to her prosperity.

The parliament of Great Britain, after a tranquil interval of a few months, met on the 24th of January, 1786. In the speech from the throne the king declared to the house of commons his earnest wish to enforce oeconomy in every department; recommending to them the maintenance of our naval strength on the most respectable footing; and above all the establishment of a **FIXED PLAN** for the reduction of the **NATIONAL DEBT**. Nothing remarkable passed until about the middle of February, when the estimate of the ordnance was brought up in the committee of supply. Upon this occasion Mr. Pitt called the attention of the house to the plan laid before them in the course of the last session, under the sanction of the duke of Richmond, master general of the ordnance, for **FORTIFYING** the **DOCKYARDS** of the kingdom; the propriety of which

It was then agreed to refer to a board of land and sea officers, whose report Mr. Pitt stated to be in the highest degree favorable to the plan of fortification submitted to their decision; but the report itself he declined as a matter of too serious and delicate a nature to lay before the house.

The discontent and surprise manifested when the question was last year under discussion, now rose into great warmth of indignation and resentment. "If the report or the essentials it contained were not to be in some mode subject to the inspection of the house, they were, it was affirmed, in exactly the same situation in which they had stood before the board was appointed. They must decide, not upon their own judgments, but in deference to the authority of others. But the house of commons were not justified in voting away the money of their constituents upon the grounds of passive complaisance and courtly submission. The expence attending this novel system would be enormous, and it was their duty before they adopted it to be fully convinced of its necessity."

General Burgoyne, who was one of the board, controverted the assertion of Mr. Pitt as to the entire approbation expressed by them of the system in question. "It was well known, he said, that cases hypothetically put admitted only of a direct answer given under the admission of the hypothesis. It remained to be ascertained, whether the case thus hypothetically put was sufficiently within the limits of probability to deserve attention. Several of the cases on which the board were called upon to decide were mere *postulata*, and hypothetically as extravagant as if it were asked, suppose by some convulsion of nature the Straits of Dover should vanish out of existence, and the coasts of England and France were to unite, would it not be expedient to fortify the isthmus between the two countries?"

Mr.

Mr. Pitt, waving the farther discussion of the question for the present, declared his determination to bring the business in the most specific and solemn manner before the house. He accordingly after a short delay moved a resolution, "That it appeared to the house, that to provide effectually for securing the dock-yards of Portsmouth and Plymouth by a permanent system of fortification was an essential object for the safety of the state, &c. &c." A violent debate arose, in the course of which no member distinguished himself so eminently as Mr. Sheridan, a gentleman who had been for some time gradually rising to a very elevated height of parliamentary reputation; and previous to his introduction into the house of commons the public had long known and admired the brilliant talents of this second Congreve in dramatic literature. Mr. Sheridan stated forcibly the danger to which the constitution would be exposed in consequence of this vast addition to the military power of the crown. "These strong military holds, maintained by numerous and disciplined garrisons, would afford tenfold the means of curbing and subduing the country as would arise from doubling the present army establishment. Could any one, he exclaimed, possibly imagine that the system now recommended was to end with Portsmouth and Plymouth, and that the reasonings of the minister would not apply to other parts of the kingdom? No—we were to figure to ourselves the same board of officers, acting under the same instructions, and deliberating with the same DATA, going a circuit round the coasts of the kingdom. He wished to see the estimate for the stationary defence of such places as Chatham, Sheerness, &c. in addition to the two-and-twenty thousand men demanded for Portsmouth and Plymouth. Mr. Sheridan professed, nevertheless, his readiness to abide by the decision of the board of officers, if it could be fairly shewn that, upon a full and unfettered investigation of the subject, they had reported it as their clear and unqualified opinion, that the

plan proposed by the duke of Richmond was such as it became the wisdom of parliament to adopt. But if the professional abilities of the duke of Richmond were ill-employed in the fabrication of so wild a project, it must be acknowledged they conspicuously appeared in the planning and constructing the report in question. There were certain detached *data*, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a distance from the main object in debate. Strong provisions covered the flanks of his assertions. His very queries were in casemates. No impression, therefore, was to be made on this fortress of sophistry by desultory observations; and it was necessary to assail it by regular approaches. Much ingenuity likewise had been shewn in extracting such parts of the report as were deemed most favorable to the proposed system. The minutes which contained the opinion of the naval officers in condemnation of the plan were wholly omitted, because they were mixed with matter of such dangerous import that no chemical process known in the ordnance laboratory could possibly separate them; while on the contrary every approving opinion, like a light oily fluid, floated at the top, and was capable of being presented to the house pure and untinged by a single particle of the argument and information upon which it was founded."

The minister upon this occasion found himself very generally deserted by the country gentlemen or independent interest in the house; and the division was rendered memorable by an exact equality of numbers, both the ayes and the noes amounting to 169. The speaker being of course compelled to give his casting vote, acquired much credit and applause by adding his negative to those who had voted for the rejection of this chimerical, absurd, and extravagant system.

It is very remarkable that the minister, notwithstanding this defeat, had the temerity after an interval of a few weeks to bring forward the question once more in a new form,

sermo, by moving, " That an estimate of the expence of such part of the plan of fortification recommended in the late report, as might appear most necessary to be carried into immediate execution, be referred to a committee of supply"—the probable expence of which was estimated at *only* 400,000l. ! This was received with extreme disapprobation; it was said to be impossible for parliament to submit to so open an attack upon their declared sentiments, and they were called upon to resist it in the most peremptory manner. Mr. Pitt, perceiving the sense of the house so manifestly adverse to this attempt, thought proper to withdraw his motion; on which Mr. Fox expressed his earnest hope " that the minister would in future pay more respect to the opinion of the legislature, and not attempt to force an obnoxious measure upon the country." The pertinacity of Mr. Pitt in this business occasioned much speculation; and those who recollected the tenor of his conduct respecting the Westminster return, were not backward to throw disgraceful imputations upon his integrity. It was thought by many to be impossible that a man of Mr. Pitt's discernment could be the sincere and cordial advocate of so preposterous a scheme; and it was strongly suspected that the duke of Richmond, in the prosecution of this favorite project, relied upon far other and higher support than that which could be derived from the obscure and ambiguous decision of a board of general officers†.

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† The fortification projects of the duke of Richmond became, in consequence of this parliamentary investigation of their merits, the theme of the public derision and ridicule; and, according to the observation of that piercing judge of mankind, the duc de la Rochefoucault, " ridicule is like a gangrene, which, when once it fastens upon one part of a character, is easily extended to the rest." In a humorous political publication of the times, styled *The ROLLAD*, the duke of Richmond is thus severely and sarcastically apostrophized:

With gorges, scaffolds, breaches, ditches, mines;  
With culverins whole and demi, and gabines;  
With trench, with counterstrap, with esplanade;  
With curtains, mote, and rhombo, and chamade;  
With polygon, epaulement, hedge and bank;  
With angle salient, and with angle flank;  
Oh thou shalt prove, should all thy schemes prevail,  
An *UNCLE TOM* on a larger scale!

The grand business of the session, as alluded to in the speech, was not brought forward till the month of March, when Mr. Pitt moved for the appointment of a select committee, by ballot, to report to the house the state of the public revenue and expenditure. The result of their enquiry was in a very high degree pleasing and satisfactory. The amount of the revenue for the current year was estimated by the committee at 15,397,000*l.*—the permanent expenditure, including the civil list, and the interest payable on the different funds amounted to 10,554,000*l.*—the peace establishment, allowing eighteen thousand men for the navy, and the usual complement of seventy regiments for the army, exclusive of life-guards and cavalry, was estimated at 3,924,000*l.*—in all, 14,478,000*l.*; of consequence there remained a surplus of more than 900,000*l.*

Mr. Pitt observed upon this report, “ that though this was stated to be the annual expenditure, a considerable interval must elapse before this reduction could take place; this term he fixed at four years. The exceedings of the army, navy, and ordnance, together with the sums necessary for the indemnification of the American loyalists, he calculated would not during this period fall short of three millions. The war from which we were just delivered had been most expensive and ruinous; these unavoidable exceedings were amongst the bitter fruits of it; but if during the first years of peace extraordinary expences were incurred, they afforded also extraordinary savings. There were sums appropriated during the war to different services, which had not been expended; four hundred and fifty thousand pounds had already been paid into the exchequer upon this account. There were moreover immense sums in the hands of former paymasters, which it was expected would soon be brought to account; these he conjecturally stated at the sum of one million. There was a balance of 600,000*l.* due to government from the East India company. When to these were added the improve-  
ments

ments that might yet be made by judicious regulations in the different branches of the revenue, he was not, Mr. Pitt said, he hoped, too sanguine in affirming that we possessed resources equal to all our ordinary and extraordinary demands. The proposition which he now submitted to the house was, the appropriation of the annual sum of one million to be invariably applied to the liquidation of the public debt. The surplus of the revenue amounting to the sum of 900,000*l.* only, Mr. Pitt moved for an additional duty on spirits, on certain kinds of timber imported, and on perfumery, which would together be more than sufficient to make up the deficiency. This annual million Mr. Pitt wisely proposed to vest in the hands of certain commissioners, to be by them applied regularly to the purchase of stock; so that no sum should ever lie within the grasp large enough to tempt him to violate this sacred deposit. The interests annually discharged were, conformably to this plan, to be added to and incorporated with the original fund, so that it would operate with a determinate and accelerated velocity; being in this respect framed upon the model of the sinking fund formerly projected by sir Robert Walpole. This fund was also to be assisted by the annuities granted for different terms, which would from time to time fall in within the limited period of twenty-eight years, at the expiration of which Mr. Pitt calculated that the fund would produce an income of four millions per annum. When a progress so considerable was made in the reduction of the debt, parliament might with propriety pause, and adopt such new measures for the relief of the nation, and the extinction of the most oppressive and burdensome taxes, as to the legislative wisdom should seem meet. The commissioners to be nominated under the act were the chancellor of the exchequer, the speaker of the house of commons, the master of the rolls, the governor and deputy governor of the bank of England, and the accountant general of the high court of chancery. Such were the persons, Mr. Pitt said, whom he should propose

propose to be appointed to this trust. This plan had long been the wish and the hope of all good men, and he felt inexpressible pleasure in being able to flatter himself that his name might be inscribed on that firm column, which was now about to be raised to national faith and national prosperity."

It was in the progress of the bill suggested by Mr. Fox, "that whenever a new loan should hereafter be made, the commissioners should be empowered to accept the loan, or such proportion of it, as should be equal to the cash then in their hands; the interest and *doucement* annexed to which should be applied to the purposes of the sinking fund." This amendment, the only one of material consequence offered, was received with candor and facility by Mr. Pitt, who declared it to be "an auspicious omen of the ultimate success of the plan, that its propriety and necessity had been so obvious as to overcome the spirit and prejudice of party, and create an unanimity of sentiment in persons who more, he was sure, from accident than inclination were so frequently of different opinions."

The bill finally passed with great and deserved approbation; all intelligent persons throughout the kingdom perfectly concurring in the sentiments expressed in the recent report of the commissioners of public accounts upon this subject. "This debt," says these impartial and faithful reporters, "is swelled to a magnitude that requires the united efforts of the ablest heads and the purest hearts to suggest the proper and effectual means of reduction. A PLAN must be formed for the reduction of this debt, and that without delay: now is the favorable moment of peace. The evil does not admit of procrastination, palliatives, or expedients. It presses on, and must be met with force and firmness: what *can* be done, the support of public credit, the preservation of national honor, and the justice due to the public creditor, demand *should* be done. It **MUST** be **DONE**, or **SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES** will ensue."

Notwithstanding



Notwithstanding the acknowledged necessity of economy in every department of government, it is grievous to relate, that even before the sinking fund bill passed into a law, a message from the KING to the house of commons was delivered by the minister, stating, " that it gave him great concern to inform them, that it had not been found POSSIBLE to confine the expences of the civil list within the annual sum of eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds, now applicable to that purpose. A farther debt had been NECESSARILY incurred, and the king relied on the ZEAL and AFFECTION of his PARLIAMENT to make provision for its discharge."

In support of the motion grounded on this message, Mr. Pitt stated, " that under Mr. Burke's reform bill an annual reduction of fifty thousand pounds from the civil list had been set apart by parliament for the liquidation by instalments of the sum of three hundred thousand pounds, then issued in exchequer bills for the supply of former deficiencies. Of this debt one hundred and eighty thousand pounds yet remained unpaid, and a fresh debt of thirty thousand pounds had accrued: and he rested the necessity of a grant equal to these united sums upon this *perplexing dilemma*: Either parliament had, at the period referred to, directed that, when the proposed liquidation should be effected, the civil list should be allowed fifty thousand pounds per ann. more than was necessary, or it was then put upon a footing of fifty thousand pounds per ann. less than was necessary. Experience had proved the latter to be the case; and therefore it was reasonable to expect that the sum of two hundred and ten thousand pounds, now wanting to clear off the old and new incumbrances, would be voted without hesitation."

In reply to Mr. Pitt's courtly logic, it was obvious to observe, that the parliament which fixed the expenditure of the civil list at eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds, until the debt previously contracted should be liquidated, thought

thought it at least POSSIBLE that the DIGNITY of the CROWN might be sufficiently sustained without passing the prescribed limits. It might even perhaps occur to some of the members, however indecorous the mention of it in a parliamentary debate, that the executive government of the republic of America was supported without any apparent forfeiture of DIGNITY, at less than one FORTIETH part of the expence.

This demand was the more extraordinary, as the king in his speech from the throne at the opening of the session, December, 1782, had said, "I have carried into strict execution the several reductions in my civil list expences, directed by an act of last session; I have introduced a farther reform in other departments, and suppressed several sinecure places in them. I have by this means so regulated my establishments, that MY EXPENCES SHALL NOT IN FUTURE EXCEED MY INCOME."

No attempt being made to repeal that clause in Mr. Burke's reform bill, which regulated the expenditure of the civil list, it was urged to be very extraordinary, while that bill remained in full force, to come down in the face of an act of parliament, and call upon the house to vote money for the debts of the crown. It is almost superfluous to say, that all the arguments offered on this head proved a mere waste of words, and that the money was ultimately voted.

Many petitions were presented during the session, for the repeal of the odious tax upon retail shops; and a motion was formally made by sir Watkins Lewis, member for the city of London, for that purpose, without effect, though it was somewhat mitigated by a reduction of the rates. In this business Mr. Pitt shewed a degree of perseverance bordering upon obstinacy, which it had been surely better to have reserved for a more important occasion,

Mr.

Mr. Fox acutely remarked on the subject of the proposed alterations, "that the greater part of Mr. Pitt's arguments had been intended to prove that the tax was not personal; and that it must find its level, and fall upon the consumer. If this were true, what was there to recommend his modifications? He had stated, that he would take off or diminish the portion of the tax paid by the poorer class of shopkeepers, which would considerably exonerate that description of persons. Of what would it exonerate them? Of the burden borne by the consumer? Glaring indeed was the inconsistency of his actions, when compared with his arguments."

An attempt was also made by Mr. Pulteney, supported by many respectable members of the house, to explain and amend the act of the last session, relative to hawkers and pedlars; and particularly to repeal a most detestably oppressive clause, by which justices of the peace were empowered to imprison any person of this profession at their discretion. This was rejected, at the second reading, by a majority of fifty voices.

About this period Mr. Pitt brought in a bill for transferring part of the duties on foreign wines from the customs to the excise. The revenue on this article, the consumption of which had certainly not diminished, Mr. Pitt stated to be inferior by the sum of two hundred and eighty thousand pounds to what it had been in the middle of the century. The terrible alarm excited by sir Robert Walpole's memorable attempt to extend the laws of excise fifty years before, had now completely subsided, and the bill passed with general approbation.

In the house of peers lord Loughborough, who was now again metamorphosed into a whig and a patriot, opposed the bill, as in the highest degree arbitrary and unconstitutional. He was answered by lord Camden, whose zeal for the constitution had been subject to no such remarkable variations. Lord Camden admitted "that the excise laws taken collectively might in a certain sense be considered

as a departure from the constitution ; but the present state of the country rendered them necessary. The present bill, in particular, was calculated to counteract the notorious impositions practised by the wine-merchants to delude the public, to cheat the revenue, and injure the health of the consumer. In these iniquities it was that a justification of this useful and salutary measure was to be found. The bill passed without a division.

Next to the establishment of the new sinking fund the affairs of India occupied, during this session, the chief attention of parliament. A bill was brought in by Mr. Dundas, which with some opposition passed into a law, to explain and amend the act of 1784. This bill, among other regulations of inferior importance, bestowed upon the governor general of India the high prerogative of deciding in opposition to the sense of the majority of the council. The offices of commander in chief and governor general were in future united in the same person ; and Earl Cornwallis, who had borne so conspicuous a part in the American war, and whose character stood deservedly high in the public estimation, was nominated to fill this important commission.

Soon after this Mr. Pitt, stating certain exigencies arising from the peculiar situation of the East India company, moved that they be empowered to raise the sum of two millions for the necessary increase of their capital. This was in itself a very problematic proof of the vaunted prosperity of the company ; but Mr. Pitt asserted the necessity to be temporary, and that it arose chiefly from the beneficial operation of the commutation act, in consequence of which the company's sales of tea had increased from six to fourteen millions of pounds, exclusive of other articles ; and in proportion to an increase of trade, an increase of capital became indispensably requisite. And on this ground the bill passed with little difficulty. These measures were regarded with cold indifference ; but the feelings

feelings of the nation were wrought up to an high pitch of solicitude and curiosity by the subsequent proceedings of parliament relative to India.

Mr. HASTINGS, late governor of Bengal, arrived in England in the month of June 1785; and the season being then far advanced, Mr. Burke gave notice of his intention to move early in the next session for a parliamentary investigation into his conduct.

On the very first day of the meeting of parliament after the recess, major Scott, who had upon all occasions distinguished himself as the friend and advocate of Mr. Hastings, reminded Mr. Burke of the pledge he had made, and challenged him in pressing and peremptory terms to come to an immediate decision. Mr. Burke calmly replied, "that he should imitate the conduct of the duke of Parma, who came from the low countries to relieve the city of Paris, then besieged by king Henry IV. The king, impatient and full of ardor, urged the duke to instant battle; but that experienced and celebrated commander replied, that he had not travelled so far to learn from his enemy the time when it was most proper to engage."

On the 17th of February 1786, however, Mr. Burke, in the spirit of ancient chivalry, threw down the gauntlet, and desiring that the resolutions of May 28, 1782, might be read (resolutions moved by Mr. Dundas, as chairman of the select committee, declaratory of the culpability of Mr. Hastings, and the consequent necessity of his recall), declared his "deep regret, that the solemn and important business of that day had not been brought forward in the plenitude of weight and efficiency, by the original mover of the resolutions now recited. Most feelingly did he lament, as the unwelcome consequence of a devolution caused partly by the natural demise of some, the political decease of others, and in particular cases a death to virtue and to principle, that he should now remain alone engaged

gaged in the attempt to preserve unfulfilled the honor and the consistency of that house, which had fixed upon Mr. Hastings as an object of their particular and formal accusation. Acting under their sanction, he asserted a claim to their protection. There were various modes of proceeding which might be adopted in this business—the first of these was a direction to the attorney general to prosecute. But not to insist upon the apparent disinclination of the present attorney general (Mr. Arden) to exert his powers in this great and momentous cause, he did not conceive that a trial by jury was well calculated for the purpose of obtaining justice against so elevated an offender. In the court of king's bench the dignity of such a trial would ill afford with causes of *meum* and *tuum*, actions of battery and assault, of trespass and trover, together with the innumerable tribe of subordinate misdemeanors. The second mode of prosecution was that by bill of pains and penalties. To this he had insuperable objections, as radically unjust, and as tarnishing in no slight degree the character of that house, the members of which would thus preposterously appear in the two-fold capacity of accusers and judges. The only alternative which remained, was the ancient and constitutional mode of proceeding by 'IMPEACHMENT': as a necessary preparatory to which, he concluded with moving for the papers necessary to substantiate the charge which he had now in immediate contemplation to bring forward against the late governor general Hastings."

Mr. Dundas with his usual versatility affirmed, "that though he had thought it expedient in the year 1782 to recall Mr. Hastings from India, he now rejoiced that the resolutions moved by him had not taken effect. Since that period Mr. Hastings had rendered most essential services to the company, and he should have extremely regretted to have been the means of depriving the company of a servant so distinguished by his zeal and capacity. He had certainly moved a vote of censure on Mr. Hastings; but Mr. Hastings had since received the  
thanks

thanks of the court of directors, in which, had he been a director, he would most willingly have concurred, from a thorough conviction that the thanks were merited."

Some difficulties having been suggested by Mr. Pitt, respecting the production of the papers called for, Mr. Burke declared in lofty terms this demur to be "an invasion of the prerogative of a public accuser. He had an unquestionable claim to all such documents, proofs, and papers, as he saw or esteemed to be necessary to support the charge which he undertook to advance. The downfall of the greatest empire in the world had originated in the mal-administration of its provinces. When Rome felt within herself the seeds of decline, and the inroads of corruption, a man of the first rank and of the highest connections in the state was brought to punishment. VERRÈS, the governor of Sicily, was united in affinity with all that was most splendid and most opulent in the seat of empire, with the Hortensii and the Metelli. But when CICERO undertook his accusation, the government itself adopted his prosecution. No less than one hundred and fifty days were allowed for the collection of materials, and the justice of the Roman senate opened to the accuser all the cabinets whence documents were to be obtained." In the result, the papers with some few exceptions, were granted.

On the 4th of April, 1786, Mr. Burke solemnly rose to charge Warren Hastings, esq. late governor general of Bengal, with high crimes and misdemeanors in the execution of his office, exhibiting at the same time nine distinct articles of accusation, which in a few weeks were increased to the number of twenty-two.

On the 1st of May Mr. Hastings, at his own express desire, and by the indulgence of the house, was heard at the bar of the house, in this early period of the business, in his own defence: and at the farther request of the accused, the minutes of his defence were ordered to lie on the

the table. But the general opinion, faintly controverted even by the friends of Mr. Hastings, was, that the DEFENCE, thus precipitately and prematurely delivered, was of no service to his cause, and contributed in a very slight and inadequate degree to the vindication of his character. Though his assertions were bold, his arguments were weak, and the language of this defence was beyond all example boastful and arrogant. He had even the weakness and presumption to call in question the AUTHORITY of the house to institute a judicial enquiry into his conduct.

The house, unmoved by what they had heard, proceeded in the examination of evidence: and the first article of impeachment respecting the Rohilla war was brought formally before the house on the 1st of June. After a very long debate, the question was decided in favor of Mr. Hastings, ayes for the impeachment being 67, noes 119.

Mr. Pitt on this occasion gave a silent vote against the motion; but the ground on which he voted was tolerably well ascertained by a declaration he had previously made, when the subject of the Rohilla war was in a more general way discussed, "that he considered that transaction in a horribly alarming point of view; and as being so repugnant to every sentiment of human nature, that nothing could justify it but the strongest motives of political expediency, and the invincible principles of retributive justice—adding, nevertheless, that it would be highly inconsistent and absurd to consider Mr. Hastings now in the light of a culprit, for any measures taken by him previously to the period in which he had been nominated by act of parliament governor general of India, which was the highest certificate of legislative approbation." But surely, in the contemplation of common justice and common sense, this re-appointment could not be regarded as equivalent to an acquittal, unless the house were at  
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that period in possession of the evidence on which the merits or demerits of the transaction rested, which it was notorious they were not.

On the 13th of June, the second charge relative to the Rajah of Benares being brought forward, it was resolved by the house, on a division of 119 to 79 voices, "that this CHARGE contained MATTER OF IMPEACHMENT against the late GOVERNOR GENERAL OF BENGAL." On this occasion Mr. Pitt spoke in support of the motion; but admitting the legality of the discretionary power assumed by Mr. Hastings, he confined the criminality of the charge to the enormity of the fine levied upon the Rajah, and its concomitant circumstances of oppression and cruelty.

On the 11th of July, 1786, an end was put to these proceedings for the present by a prorogation of the parliament, which was dismissed with assurances of "the particular satisfaction with which the king had observed their diligent attention to the public business, and the measures they had adopted for improving the resources of the country."

Soon after the rising of parliament, a singular incident occurred which ingrossed for a moment the attention of the public. As the king was alighting from his post-chariot at the garden entrance of St. James's palace, August the 2d, a woman decently dressed presented a paper to his majesty; and while he was in the act of receiving it, she struck with a concealed knife at his breast. The king happily avoided the blow by drawing back; and as she was preparing to make a second thrust, one of the yeomen caught her arm, and the weapon was wrenched out of her hand.

On examination before the privy council, it immediately appeared that the woman was insane. Being asked where she had lately resided, she answered frantically, "that she had been all abroad since that matter of the crown broke out." Being further questioned what matter? she said, "that the crown was hers; and that if she

had not her right, England would be deluged in blood for a thousand generations." On being interrogated as to the nature of her right, she refused to answer, saying in the genuine style of royalty, "that her rights were a MYSTERY."

It appeared that this poor maniac, whose name was Margaret Nicholson, had presented a petition ten days before, full of wild and incoherent nonsense. Like most other petitions, it had probably never been read, or the person of the petitioner would have been secured. The idea of a judicial process was of course abandoned, and she was confined to a fit apartment provided for her in Bethlehem hospital. In a few days the lord mayor, aldermen, sheriffs and common council of the city of London went in procession to St. James's to present an address to his majesty on his happy escape from *assassination*. This example was followed by nearly all the corporate bodies throughout the kingdom; and the popularity of the king was sensibly increased by this trivial and almost ludicrous incident. The number and quality of *knighthoods* conferred on occasion of these addresses, were such as completed the ridicule, so successfully levelled since the days of Cervantes, against that once honorable and envied distinction†.

In the month of September 1786, the king was pleased to appoint a new committee of council, for the consideration of all matters relating to trade and foreign plantations. Of this board the famous Charles Jenkinson, now for his long and faithful services created lord Hawkebury, and constituted chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, was declared president. Under the auspices of this new commission a TREATY OF COMMERCE was signed between the two courts of England and France (September 26, 1786)

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† According to an anecdote somewhere related of Charles II. the witty and profligate, that monarch observing a person on whom he was about to confer the *honor* of knighthood to hang down his head and blush, as if conscious of the deficiency of his pretensions, exclaimed with his usual good humour and pleasantry, "Don't be ashamed—'Tis I who have most reason."

on the liberal principles of equality and reciprocity. Its general principle was to admit the mutual importation and exportation of the commodities of each country at a very low *ad valorem* duty. The negotiator of this treaty was Mr. Eden, who under the coalition administration had filled the lucrative office of vice-treasurer of Ireland.

This was the first memorable defection from that ill-starred and heterogeneous alliance: and it was the more remarkable, as Mr. Eden had himself been generally considered as the original projector of the coalition, or at least as the man who might contest that honor with Mr. Burke. He soon attained to the dignity of the peerage under the title of baron Auckland.

About the same time a convention was signed with Spain of some importance, as it finally terminated the long subsisting disputes respecting the settlements of the English nation on the Mosquito shore, and the coast of Honduras. By the present treaty the Mosquito settlements were formally and explicitly relinquished, as they had already virtually been by the 6th article of the general treaty of 1783. In return the boundaries of the English settlements on the coast and bay of Honduras were somewhat extended, but in such manner, and on such conditions, as to leave the king of Spain in full possession of his territorial rights and exclusive dominion.

In a political view this convention answered a valuable purpose, as it removed a probable source of national disagreement. But the claims of humanity and justice were not sufficiently attended to. For the Mosquito settlers, who had from time immemorial occupied their lands and habitations under the protection of the English government, and who amounted to many hundred families in number, were peremptorily commanded to evacuate the country of the Mosquitoes, without exception, in the space of eighteen months, nothing farther being stipulated in their favor, than that his catholic majesty "shall order

his governors to grant to the said English so dispersed, all possible facilities for their removal to the settlements agreed upon by the present convention."

The greatest confusion, consternation, and distress among this unhappy people, was the inevitable result of this barbarous edict of expulsion, which, with the cold-blooded politicians of Europe, at the distance of 3000 miles, passed only for a regulation of commerce. An affecting representation of their distresses, and an humble petition for some sort of indemnification from the government which had thus carelessly abandoned them to their fate, was subsequently presented to the board of treasury; but it does not appear to have excited any attention. By "the insolence of office," the sighs of the oppressed are regarded as a species of insult.

On the re-assembling of parliament, January 23, 1787, the first object of debate which presented itself, was the commercial treaty with France. On the 12th of February the house resolved itself into a committee on this subject, when Mr. Pitt entered into a most able and eloquent vindication of the measure, though, in the opinion of impartial persons, the treaty sufficiently spoke its own merits. Mr. Pitt declared in energetic terms his abhorrence of the maxim, that any nation was destined to be the natural and unalterable foe of another. It had no foundation in the experience of nations, or in the history of men. It was a libel on the constitution of political societies, and supposed the existence of infernal malignity in our original frame. "France (Mr. Pitt said) in most of our wars had been the aggressor; but her assurances and frankness in the present negotiation were such as to entitle her to a return of confidence. It was indeed ridiculous to imagine that the French would consent to yield advantages without the idea of compensation. The treaty would doubtless be a benefit to them; but he did not hesitate to say it would be a much greater benefit to us. She gained for her wines  
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and other productions a great and opulent market. We did the same for our manufacturers to a far greater degree. She procured a market of eight millions of people, we a market of twenty-four millions. Both nations were disposed and prepared for such a connection. France, by the peculiar dispensation of providence, was gifted, perhaps more than any other country upon earth, with what made life desirable, in point of soil, climate, and natural productions, in the most fertile vineyards, and the richest harvests. Britain, on the other hand, possessing these advantages in an inferior degree, had, from the happy freedom of its constitution, and the equal security of its laws, risen to a state of commercial grandeur, and acquired the ability of supplying France with the requisite conveniences of life, in exchange for her natural luxuries."

Very plausible objections were nevertheless suggested by the leaders of opposition against this treaty, and predictions hazarded of the injury which would be sustained by Great Britain in consequence of this measure, which were far from being eventually verified; and which it is therefore superfluous to particularize. Such, nevertheless, was the impression made upon the house by the arguments advanced, that no less than 162 members divided against the minister on a motion for an address to his majesty, declaratory of the approbation of the house; which was ultimately carried by a majority of 76 voices.

The opposition in the house was not however supported, as in the case of the Irish propositions, by any commercial clamors beyond its walls. And Mr. Pitt accurately and satisfactorily accounted for this difference, by observing "that in the former instance the clamors of the manufacturers, though he thought them founded in error, had been general and violent, because they perceived no great and positive advantage in the intercourse to balance the apprehended evil of a rivalry and competition, England being already in possession of the Irish market. But *now* that they

they saw so manifest and valuable a benefit to be reaped, they were willing to hazard the possibility of the injury."

The topic on which the opposition insisted with the most advantage; and indeed the only real difficulty respecting the execution of this treaty, arose from its inconsistency on the *first blush* with the famous Methuen treaty, concluded with Portugal early in the present century, in conformity to which the duties on Portugal wines were to bear in future the proportion of only two-thirds of those imported from France, and other countries. But this point being candidly conceded by France in the progress of the business, the measure received, as it well deserved, the necessary concurrence and sanction of parliament, and the whole transaction terminated greatly to the honor of the minister, and the advantage of the nation; the sole cause of regret, in fact, being the limitation of the treaty to the short period of twelve years.

Another very useful commercial measure, though of very inferior importance, a measure founded on the reports of the commissioners of public accounts, was early in the present session brought forward by Mr. Pitt for the consolidation of the customs, by the total abolition of all the existing confused and complex duties, and substituting in their stead a single duty on each article, amounting as nearly as possible to the aggregate of the various subsidies now paid; taking universally, instead of a fraction, the nearest integral number above it. By this means the revenue would be considerably benefited, and the merchant relieved from a serious inconvenience. It is a curious circumstance, that the series of resolutions presented to the house, but of which they chose to wave the formality of reading, amounted to more than three thousand in number.

A regulation of finance, much less generally approved, was also proposed by Mr. Pitt, relative to the tax on post-horses, which he affirmed to have been most grossly and scandalously evaded. By way of remedy, he recommend-

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ed that it should be farmed by auction to the highest bidder, on the usual plan of the turnpike duty. This was represented as repugnant to the genius of the English constitution. It might prove, as the farming of the revenue had notoriously done in France, the source of infinite abuse and oppression. It established a dangerous and alarming precedent, and required to be resolutely resisted in the outset. Upon the question for going into a committee on this bill, the numbers were only 147 ayes to 100 noes. It must however be acknowledged, that this obnoxious regulation has not been found productive of any practical inconvenience.

In the course of the session Mr. Fox moved for the repeal of the odious shop tax, which, in consequence of the pertinacious adherence of Mr. Pitt to a measure in itself very trivial and uninteresting, had become a matter of permanent and serious concern. It appeared from the statement of Mr. Fox, that the city of London and its environs paid forty-three shares in fifty-nine of this duty, the whole produce being estimated at only fifty-nine thousand pounds. This was affirmed with reason to be an unjust and monstrous disproportion. But in truth the commutation tax fell as heavily in proportion upon the country, as the shop tax upon the metropolis; however comparatively destitute of the means of enforcing their complaints, or procuring redress. On the division the numbers were, ayes 147, noes 183; the ministerial majority in a full house being, on this second attempt at repeal, reduced to 36 voices only.

On the 28th of March 1787, a motion of great importance was made by Mr. Beaufoy, a member of the house, distinguished by his knowledge, talents, and general respectability of character, for amending, and in part repealing, the laws known by the appellation of the corporation and test acts, so far as related to the protestant dissenters, who weakly flattered themselves, that their recent services  
were

were not as yet wholly lost to the recollection of the court. In his introductory speech, Mr. Beaufoy gave a clear and judicious historical narrative of the origin of these acts. "The corporation act declared that no person should be elected into any municipal office, who should not one year before his election have taken the sacrament according to the usage of the church of England. The test act required of every person accepting a civil or military office under the crown, to take the sacrament in like manner within a limited time; in default of which he was liable to a fine of 500*l.* and incurred other penalties in the highest degree severe and rigorous. The first of these acts was passed in the year 1661; and the despotic and arbitrary spirit in which it was framed, sufficiently appeared from a single clause in the act, empowering the king for a limited time to remove at his pleasure all municipal officers by commissioners of his appointment. This act was levelled indiscriminately against protestant and catholic dissenters: but in the year 1673, the æra of the test act, the state of things was materially changed. The jealousy of parliament in regard to the protestant dissenters had now subsided, and the alarm of all the different denominations of protestants was equally excited by the dangers to which protestantism itself was exposed by the flagrant attempts of the court to effect the restoration of the popish religion. The king himself was believed, on good ground, to be nothing better than a concealed papist. The duke of York, his brother, and immediate successor to the crown, was not only an avowed convert to that religion, but a flaming and furious zealot. Lord Clifford, the first minister, and other persons in high authority, were also bigoted papists; and a declaration of indulgence had been published by the king, in order to make way for the introduction of popery. In these circumstances, the test act was a measure of national policy and safety. It bore the title of 'An act for preventing the danger which may happen from popish recusants'—and the dissenters, far from  
concurring



concurring in the opposition made by the court to this bill, publicly declared through the medium of Mr. alderman Love, one of the members for the city of London, and himself a dissenter, ‘that in a time of public danger they would in no wise impede the progress of a measure deemed essential to the safety of the kingdom;—and *though they were accidentally included in the operation of it*, they would waive their claim to an exemption, trusting to the good faith, justice, and humanity of parliament, that a future provision should be made for their relief.’ This seasonable declaration extremely facilitated the passing of the bill, and was received with just and general applause. A bill for their relief was accordingly at a subsequent period of the session passed by the commons, but defeated by the sudden prorogation of parliament. A second bill was in a succeeding parliament brought in, and passed both houses; but while it lay ready for the royal assent, the king degraded his dignity so far, as secretly to order the clerk of the crown to withdraw the bill; and the parliament being soon afterwards dissolved, it never passed into a law.

“But the relief which the unprincipled profligacy of Charles refused to grant, the magnanimity of William was impatient to bestow. In one of his earliest speeches from the throne, he expressed his ‘earnest hope, that such alteration would be made in the laws as would leave room for the admission of all his protestant subjects who were willing to serve him.’ But at this period the high church and tory interest predominated in opposition to the wise and salutary policy of the court. From the memorable protest of the lords upon this subject in the year 1689, it appeared nevertheless that the sentiments of several of the greatest men in that extraordinary æra coincided with those of their sovereign. And upon another occasion of a still later date—a conference between the two houses upon the bill of occasional conformity—the peers (not a few individuals only of that assembly, but the whole house) expressed in language still more emphatical their abhorrence of the injustice of the test act.”

In discussing the general policy of this law, Mr. Beaufoy observed, " that to the higher trust of legislative authority the dissenters were admitted without reserve. From the members of that house, from the members of the house of peers, no religious test was required. Hence he strongly inferred the absurdity of the imposition in question. He had heard indeed of an idle opinion that there was something of a republican tendency, of an anti-monarchical bias, in the very doctrines of the presbyterian church. From so vague an assertion he appealed to experience. Were the Scots suspected of an indifference to Monarchy? He had heard them taxed with a predilection for those maxims of policy which were the most favourable to power; but of levelling principles, of republican attachments, he had never heard them accused. The English dissenters, since the revolution, which had first given this country a constitution, had uniformly acted on principles the most beneficial, and had constantly proved themselves the ardent supporters and the faithful adherents of that system of monarchy which was established by law. Would then the repeal of the test act prove injurious to the established church? GOD FORBID! The suggested repeal was no attack upon the rights of others; it was merely the completion of that wise system of toleration adopted at the æra of the revolution. The church of England flourished long before the test act existed. In Scotland, no such law ever had a being. Had Scotland therefore no established church? In Ireland, the relief now solicited had been granted seven years ago. But was the church of Ireland therefore destroyed? In Holland, in Russia, in Prussia, in HANOVER, no traces of such a test were to be found. In the dominions of the emperor, all disqualifications of this nature had been recently abolished. In France, a similar relief was granted by the edict of Nantz, from the revocation of which France had so severely suffered, and which was now, as it was supposed, about to be restored. In fact,"

fact," Mr. Beaufoy justly added, " the repeal of the test, so far from being pernicious to the established church, would be salutary. The different classes of dissenters had no general interest, no bond of union, but that reproachful exclusion from public employments which was common to them all. If he were farther asked, If justice be the principle on which you decide, shall not the catholics enjoy the common privileges of citizenship? he would answer without hesitation, If the catholics could give a sufficient pledge of loyalty to their sovereign, and attachment to the laws—questions not now before the house—he should think they ought to be admitted to the civil and military service of the state." Such were the liberal and elevated sentiments of this speaker, who concluded this excellent address with an enumeration of other considerations, more of a religious than political kind, in favor of the repeal, deduced from the gross profanation to which the nature of the present test subjected a sacred and solemn christian rite. Mr. Beaufoy declared, " that he should have thought it not unbecoming the sanctity of the bishops to have solicited the removal of this scandal from the church. But let the requisition come from whatever quarter it might, sure he was that a compliance with it would reflect honor on that house: for whatever tended to the debasement of religion, diminished political authority, and weakened all the functions of civil and social order."

Lord North, true to his original principles of toryism and high churchism, rose with much zeal to oppose this dangerous attempt at innovation. Declaring himself a friend to toleration in its full extent, he conjured the house at the same time to consider, that the present motion went not merely to toleration, but to the repeal of an act which was the great bulwark of the constitution, and to which we owed the inestimable blessings of freedom. The exclusion of the dissenters from civil offices, lord North said,

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was no injury or disgrace. The test act was merely a civil and political regulation ; and the arguments against it were equally applicable to all those restrictions which the wisdom of government in all countries had found it necessary to establish. His lordship mentioned the alarm of the clergy at this attempt ; and he added, that they all knew the pernicious nature of a cry, that **THE CHURCH** is in DANGER. There was no complaint of ecclesiastical tyranny ;—universal toleration was established. Let them therefore be upon their guard against **INNOVATION** in the **CHURCH**, nor confound the toleration of religious opinions with the mode of admission to civil and military appointments.”

Mr. Pitt enforced the arguments of lord North, but with far more ability and address. He declared, in very flattering and explicit terms, the esteem and regard which he entertained for the collective body of protestant dissenters, who had ever approved themselves the genuine and zealous friends of constitutional liberty ; of which their conduct during the late political conflicts had existed a memorable proof, and he acknowledged with gratitude and pleasure the honourable and unanimous support which he had experienced from them at that momentous and interesting crisis. He must nevertheless, however reluctantly, discharge what he conceived to be his indispensable duty in opposing the present application for a repeal of the corporation and test acts. It had been said, If you grant this, the same persons will soon come to you again to ask something more. This had no weight with him. He would not object to concede what he ought to concede, because he might be asked to concede what he ought not to concede. But a distinction was, in his opinion, here necessary to be made between political and civil liberty. The latter he contended that the dissenters already enjoyed in its fullest extent. The former was in fact nothing else than a distribution of power, which must be regulated by the discretion of the state. The employments and offices  
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of the state were not the property of individuals; they were public trusts to be confided to those who were politically competent to occupy them. The dissenters desired, as a matter of right and justice, a participation of offices. If this were granted, they might acquire a dangerous ascendancy in corporations; and an exclusive corporation interest in the hands of the dissenters was a very different thing from the liberty of sitting in that house on the free choice of the general mass of electors. It was now indeed asserted, that they had no such object in contemplation. But it was necessary to take into the account the real springs by which human affairs were regulated, and not to depend upon the security of words in contradistinction to the tenor and tendency of actions. There were persons amongst the dissenters who would not admit any ecclesiastical establishment to be necessary. Against such persons it became the legislature to be upon their guard. He had indeed an high opinion of the merits of dissenters; but they already enjoyed every mental privilege, every freedom to serve God according to their consciences in the most ample degree."

The motion of Mr. Beaufoy was powerfully supported by Mr. Fox, who magnanimously declared, "that whatever personal reason he might have to complain of the recent conduct of the dissenters, he would never lose sight of the great principles of civil and religious liberty, on which the present application to the house was founded. He had considered himself as honored in acting with them on many former occasions, and he acknowledged the general tenor of their political conduct to be in the highest degree meritorious. In his opinion, it was very unwise in any case to take religion as religion for a test in politics; and he averred, that the maxims advanced by Mr. Pitt were such, that though he declined persecution in words, he admitted the whole extent of it in principle." Upon a division,

vision, after a long debate, the numbers appeared, for the motion 100, against it 178.

This was by no means, considering the opposition of the minister to the motion, a discouraging division on the first effort. But the dissenters were in the last degree astonished and chagrined at the part taken by Mr. Pitt in this debate, it being almost universally understood by them, that the application would at least not be discountenanced by him. And the expressions used by him in the previous conferences held with the leading dissenters, though far from amounting to a promise of support, were considered as certain indications of a favourable disposition. Doubtless Mr. Pitt found, in the progress of the business, obstacles in the way of the repeal which he had not at first apprehended; and he flattered himself, that his public professions of regard and esteem for the dissenters would so far soothe and conciliate their minds as to reconcile them to the disappointment they sustained. But the most refined address, and the greatest ability in the *management of business*, may easily be overrated. It was not possible for Mr. Pitt, on this grand question, to stand well at once with the court and with the dissenters. The dissenters clearly perceived the difference between the situation of Mr. Pitt and that of his predecessor sir Robert Walpole, when the last application for a repeal of the test was made on their part above fifty years before. That wise minister, though his judgment was decidedly in favor of the repeal *abstractedly considered*, was justly apprehensive of the clamors which would have been unquestionably raised at that turbulent period against a measure, as the consequence of which the weak, the bigoted, and the factious would have joined in vociferating, that the CHURCH was in DANGER. It was an experiment at that time not worth the risque; and the minister chose the least of the two evils, condescending himself to talk absurdly, in order to prevent others from acting mischievously. But that senseless and terrific

clamour

clamor had long since become a mere *brutum fulmen*. The application of the dissenters in the present instance was in unison with the general sense of the public and of the parliament, or at least not inconsistent with it; and a slight degree of countenance only from the court would have sufficed to ensure the success of the motion: nor, on the other hand, was the opposition of the court so openly and decidedly hostile as to preclude the idea of future attempts.

The attention of the house and of the nation was soon transferred to a subject of a very different nature. When the prince of Wales attained the age of majority, A. D. 1783, the sum of fifty thousand pounds per annum only was allotted to him out of the civil list revenue to defray the entire expence of his establishment. Considering the numerous salaries payable to the officers of his household, this sum was manifestly inadequate to the just support of his rank and situation in life; and the then ministers, Mr. Fox and lord North, strongly insisted upon the necessity of fixing the revenue of the prince at one hundred thousand pounds per annum, which the late king had enjoyed as prince of Wales at a period when the civil list produced two hundred thousand pounds per annum less than at present. To this the sovereign positively objected; and the prince in order to prevent disagreeable consequences, generously declared, that he chose to depend upon the spontaneous bounty of the king. The obvious result of this miserable oeconomy was, that the prince, in the four years which were now elapsed, had contracted debts to a large amount; his negligence as to pecuniary concerns being perhaps increased by the consciousness of the extreme difficulty and apparent impossibility of contracting his expences within the narrow limits of his income. The public, not sufficiently advertng to these circumstances, censured the prince with a too rigid severity for the heedlessness and prodigality of his conduct. The general

neral prejudice was much heightened by the habitual and confidential intercourse maintained by the prince with the great leaders of the late unpopular administration. It was also too notorious to admit of disguise or palliation, that the prince was exempt from none of those youthful indiscretions and excesses by which men of high rank in early life are for the most part so unhappily characterized.

A report of a very serious nature had moreover for some time past gained very general credit; namely, that the prince had contracted a secret marriage with a lady of the Roman catholic religion;—a fatal step, for which the acknowledged personal charms and mental accomplishments of Mrs. Fitzherbert (such was the name of the lady in question) would make in the public opinion a very inadequate compensation. It is true that the marriage, in whatever mode it were solemnized could not by the royal marriage act be regarded as legal; and by a clause in the act of settlement, if the legality of the marriage were affirmed, the prince, by marrying a papist, would *ipso facto* forfeit his right of succession to the crown. His situation therefore was in the highest degree singular and critical, especially as the marriage act itself was by many persons considered as founded in such manifest absurdity and injustice, as to be in its own nature null and void. To balance these unfavorable circumstances, the prince was said to possess good temper and good sense: his person was agreeable, his deportment affable and engaging, and, by mixing familiarly in the society of men of enlightened minds, he had, as there was good reason to believe, acquired far juster and more liberal ideas of the nature of government and the spirit of legislation than those which constituted the policy of the present reign. Happily also, as it was contrary to law for the heir apparent to leave the kingdom, he had the advantage of an English education, and his manners and modes of thinking were entirely English; while the German education of the bishop of Osnaburgh,



Orkhaburgh, now Duke of York, and of the other younger branches of the royal house, and their familiarity with the German courts, could have no other tendency than to inspire them with sentiments totally opposite to the genius of the English constitution. There is nothing indeed more surprizing in the history of the present reign, than the tame acquiescence of the legislature in so apparent an affront, as is implied in the supposition that an English prince cannot receive an education in England proper for his station. England has, it must be confessed been indeed grossly and culpably inattentive to the education of her princes; and in this respect, as well as many others, the present reign will furnish to posterity a striking and instructive lesson.

Finding his embarrassments continually increasing, and a large debt accumulated, the prince of Wales, in the summer of 1786, applied to the king his father for assistance: but meeting with a harsh and peremptory refusal, he adopted a resolution which seemed to indicate a firmness and vigor of mind, capable under a right direction of great and noble things. Suppressing the establishment of his household, he formally vested forty thousand pounds per annum of his revenue in the hands of trustees for the liquidation of his debts. His stud of running horses, his hunters, and even his coach-horses, were sold by public auction. The elegant improvements and additions making to the palace of Carlton House, where he resided, were suddenly stopped, and the most splendid apartments shut up from use; in this manner choosing to retire from the world, rather than forfeit the honor of a gentleman by practising on the credulity of his creditors.

Things had remained in this posture for near a twelvemonth, when the prince was persuaded to give his assent to a proposal for laying the state of his affairs before parliament; and on the 20th of April Mr. Alderman Newnham, member for the city of London, gave notice that

he would bring forward a motion for an address to the king, praying him to take the situation of the prince into consideration, and to grant him such relief as he in his wisdom should think fit, and pledging the house to make good the same. This gave rise to an interesting conversation; and Mr. Newnham was by the minister and many other members of the house, earnestly entreated to withdraw his motion, as fertile of inconvenience and mischief.

Mr. Pitt said, "that by the perseverance of Mr. Newnham he should be driven to the disclosure of circumstances which he should otherwise have thought it his duty to conceal." And Mr. Rolle, member for Devonshire, declared, "that the investigation of this question involved in it circumstances which tended immediately to affect the constitution in church and state."

Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and other gentlemen in the confidence of the prince, declared that "there was nothing which the prince of Wales less feared, than a full and impartial investigation of his conduct; and nothing that his royal highness would more deprecate, than a studied ambiguity or affected tenderness, on the pretence of respect or indulgence." Mr. Rolle was particularly called upon, though in vain, to explain the extraordinary language he had used.

The subject being in a few days resumed, Mr. Fox again called the attention of the house to the declaration of Mr. Rolle. "To what that declaration alluded (Mr. Fox said) it was impossible to ascertain, till the person who made it thought proper to explain his meaning: but he supposed it must refer to that base and malicious calumny which had been propagated without doors by the enemies of the prince, with a view to depreciate his character, and injure him in the esteem of his country." Mr. Fox further declared "that the prince had authorised him to assert, that, as a peer of parliament, he was ready in the other  
house

house to submit to any the most pointed questions that could be put to him upon the subject, or to afford the king or his ministers the fullest assurances of the utter falsehood of the fact in question."

Mr. Rolle now thought proper to acknowledge, that the subject upon which Mr. Fox had spoken, was the matter to which he had alluded as affecting both church and state. He said "that the reports relative to this transaction had made a deep impression upon the minds of all men who loved and venerated the constitution. He knew that this thing could not have been accomplished under the formal sanction of law; but if it existed as a fact, it might be productive of the most alarming consequences, and ought to be satisfactorily cleared up."

Mr. Fox replied, "that he did not deny the calumny in question merely with regard to the effect of certain existing laws, but he denied it *in toto*, in fact as well as in law. The fact not only could never have happened legally, but never did happen in any way, and had from the beginning been a vile and malignant falsehood."

Mr. Rolle rose again, and asked, "whether in what he now asserted Mr. Fox spoke from direct authority?" Mr. Fox said he had spoken from direct authority.

In consequence of these explicit and authoritative assertions, Mr. Rolle was loudly called upon to express his satisfaction. But this he obstinately declined, saying only "that the house would judge for themselves of what had passed." On this Mr. Sheridan was provoked to declare, "that if Mr. Rolle persisted in his refusal, or otherwise to put the matter into such a state of enquiry as *should* satisfy him, the house ought to come to a resolution, 'that it was seditious and disloyal to propagate reports injurious to the character of the prince.'"

Mr. Pitt now properly interposed, and protested against so flagrant an attack on the freedom of speech and deliberation in that house. And it must be confessed that Mr.

Rolle was so far justified as the voice of the public could justify him, in retaining his doubts; for a general and firm persuasion still prevailed of a secret marriage between the prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert: though no one presumed to call in question the honor of Mr. Fox in the declarations made by him in the prince's name, for which he undoubtedly had, or thought he had, sufficient authority, and which operated to the perfect apparent conviction of the house of commons; though, to complete the mystery and perplexity of the business, it was subsequently reported and believed that a temporary coolness at least had taken place between the prince and Mr. Fox from the æra of this debate, and as the consequence of that warmth of indignation which carried Mr. Fox inadvertently beyond the strict limits of his commission.

In this stage of the business an interview, at the desire of the king, took place between the prince of Wales and Mr. Pitt, at Carlton House; and the prince was informed, "that if the intended motion were withdrawn, every thing might be settled to his royal highness's satisfaction." This being acceded to, a message was delivered by the minister from the king to the house, stating his majesty's great concern, "that from the accounts of the prince of Wales it had appeared that he had incurred a debt to a large amount, which, painful as it was to him to propose any addition to the burdens of his people, he was induced by his paternal affection to the prince, to desire the assistance of parliament to discharge—on the well-grounded expectation, nevertheless, of the prince's avoiding to contract any similar debt in future; with a view to which, the king had directed a sum of ten thousand pounds to be paid out of the civil list, in addition to his former allowance."

On the very next day after the accounts referred to in the royal message were laid before the house, and of which the dignified generosity of the house suffered not the inspection,

specification, an address was voted to the king, to request him to direct the sum of one hundred and sixty-one thousand pounds to be paid out of the civil list for the full discharge of the debts of the prince of Wales, and the farther sum of twenty thousand pounds to complete the repairs of Carlton House.

It may be remarked, in dismissing this subject, that the sum of fifty thousand pounds had been already actually expended on Carlton House; so that, if the prince had enjoyed a revenue equal to that of the late king when prince of Wales, there would have accrued in the four years elapsed since his majority a very considerable saving, notwithstanding that extraordinary expence; and thus the complaints of extravagance do not appear to rest upon a very solid foundation.

The subject of Mr. Hastings's impeachment had been resumed early in the present session, and had occupied a large proportion of it. The primary charge respecting the Rohilla war, brought forward by Mr. Burke towards the conclusion of the session of 1786, had made a deep impression upon the house: and although Mr. Hastings had been acquitted of the charge, it was upon grounds on which it was impossible to rest his future defence.

The conduct of Mr. Pitt had been hitherto indecisive and mysterious; but the part taken by Mr. Jenkinson, and the party of which he was considered as the head, left no room for doubt as to the secret inclination of the court: and although Mr. Pitt, on the Benares charge, stated by Mr. Fox, had voted against Mr. Hastings, he expressly declared that he did not, *upon that account*, consider himself as committed to a final vote of impeachment. The grand question therefore still remained doubtful, when on the 7th of February 1787. Mr. Sheridan opened the third charge respecting the Begum princesses of Oude, with an eloquence and energy which were perhaps never sur-  
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passed, and which, in their consequences, proved entirely decisive.

The substance of this, as of the other principal charges, has already been recorded in the regular narration of India transactions. A slight extract or two from Mr. Sheridan's speech may serve to excite a faint idea of the transcendent ability with which this charge was enforced :—

Mr. Sheridan said, “ that the conduct of Mr. Hastings respecting the nabob and begums of Oude comprehended in it every species of human offence. He had been guilty of rapacity at once violent and insatiable, of treachery cool and premeditated, of oppression unprovoked, of barbarity wanton and unmanly. So long since as the year 1775 the begum princess, widow of Sujah ul Dowla, had written to Mr. Hastings in the following moving terms ; —“ if it is your pleasure that the mother of the late nabob, that myself, his other women, and his infant children should be reduced to a state of dishonor and distress, we must submit. But if, on the contrary, you call to mind the friendship of the late blessed nabob, you will exert yourself effectually in favor of us who are helpless.” Inflamed by disappointment at Benares, he hastened to the fortress of Chunar, to put in execution the atrocious design of instigating the nabob, son of this princess, to parricide and plunder. No sooner had Mr. Hastings determined to invade the substance of justice, than he resolved to avail himself of her judicial forms, and dispatched a messenger for the chief justice of India to assist him in perpetrating the violence he had meditated. Without a moment's pause, or the shadow of process instituted, sentence was pronounced. And thus, at the same time that the sword of government was converted to an assassin's dagger, the pure ermine of justice was stained and soiled with the basest contamination. It was clear to demonstration that the begums were not concerned in the insurrection of Benares. No, their treasures were their treason.

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If (said this eloquent speaker) the mind of Mr. Hastings were susceptible of superstition, he might image the proud spirit of Sujah ul Dowla looking down upon the ruin and devastation of his family; beholding the palace which he had adorned with the spoils of the devoted Rohillas, plundered by his base and perfidious ally; and viewing the man whom on his death-bed he had constituted the guardian of his wife, his mother, and his family, forcibly exposing those dear relations, the objects of his solemn trust, to the rigor of the merciless seasons, or the violence of the more merciless soldiery.—Such were the awful dispensations of retributive justice!—It was not given to that house to witness the tremulous joys of the millions whom the vote of that night would save from the cruelty of corrupted power. But the blessings of the people thus delivered, would not be dissipated in empty air. No; they would lift up their prayers to heaven in gratitude to the power, which, by stretching its mighty arm across the deep, had saved them from ruin and destruction.”

On this occasion Mr. Pitt acted a part which did him great honor. Though the eloquence of Mr. Sheridan had excited a spirit of enthusiasm in the house, which perhaps no degree of ministerial influence could have counteracted, it would be highly invidious and unjust to attribute the decided conduct of Mr. Pitt on this memorable night to the apprehension of being left in a minority by an attempt to negative the motion. On the contrary, he appeared penetrated with a perfect conviction of the atrocity of the facts, and of the strength of the evidence by which they were supported. And the minister, who in the comparatively insignificant business of an election return could so far degrade himself as to countenance, and even publicly to vindicate, an act of deliberate injustice, now felt all the sympathies of humanity, all the energies of virtue, awakened in his breast, and impelling him

him to testify, in terms the most explicit and expressive, his detestation of perfidy so vile, of cruelty so remorseless. On a division the numbers were, in favor of the motion 175, against it 68.

On the 2d of March Mr. Pelham opened the charge relative to the Nabob of Ferruckabad, which was affirmed by 112 against 50 voices.

On the 15th of March the charge upon the subject of contracts was brought forward by sir James Erskine. "All of them," sir James Erskine observed, "were made in direct violation of the regulations of the court of directors, 'that the contracts should be given from year to year, that they should be publicly advertised, and be disposed of to the best bidder.' The contract for rice was avowedly given to Mr. Auriol, as 'a reward for his long and faithful services.' Of his expenditure no vouchers were required, but the accounts were to be given in upon honor. This mode of passing accounts was (the honorable mover observed) peculiar to India, as indeed honor there was of a peculiar nature. It dreaded the production of proofs, had an intuitive abhorrence of being confronted with truth, and shrunk like the sensitive plant from the touch of enquiry. The opium contract Mr. Sullivan sold to the chairman of the India company, had immediately sold for a clear profit of fifty-two thousand pounds. Another contract had been given to Mr. Archibald Frazer, the near relation of sir Elijah Impey, who had thought it necessary to dispatch affidavits to England for the purpose of clearing himself from the suspicion of participating in the profits accruing from it. These affidavits (sir James said) were the pastoral essays of the learned judge, his songs *in ripas et flumina*, the forerunners only of those epic attestations, the *prælia et reges*, by which he had commemorated the wars of Benares and the rebellion of Oude." On this article the division was, ayes 60, noes 26.

Upon



Upon the 23d of March the charge relative to Fyzoola Khan was brought forward by Mr. Windham. This was carried on a division of 96 against 37 voices.

On the 2d of April Mr. Sheridan opened to the house the charge upon the subject of presents: upon which occasion he observed, "that the late governor general had, in every part of his conduct, exhibited proofs of a wild, eccentric, and irregular mind. He had been every thing by starts, and nothing long—now high and lofty, now mean and insidious—now artful and temporising, now rigid and inflexible—in pride, in passion, in all things changeable except in corruption. His revenge was a tempest, a *tornado* blackening the horizon, and involving all within the sphere of its influence in one common destruction. But his corruption was regular and systematic, a *monsoon* blowing uniformly from one point of the compass, and waisting the wealth of India to the same port in one certain direction." Upon a division, the numbers appeared, ayes 165, noes 54.

On the 19th of April the charge respecting the revenues was opened by Mr. Francis, who had formerly occupied with so much honor to himself, but so unavailingly as to the public, the office of member of the supreme council in India, and who had recently taken his seat as a member of the house of commons. This charge was of a very important and interesting nature; and Mr. Francis entered into a most able and elaborate discussion of it. He shewed, from the very nature of their tenure, "that the Zemindars were not mere collectors of the revenue, as they had been artfully represented by Mr. Hastings, but real land-holders possessing a permanent, divisible, and hereditary property, descending even to women. He enumerated the different modes of managing the revenues of Bengal, adopted by Mr. Hastings in the course of thirteen years. "The object of Mr. Hastings, he said, was to avoid coming to a fixed settlement, for then there must

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be an end of peculation. At the time of his accession to the government the provinces had not perfectly recovered the effects of the dreadful famine which had taken place in Bengal at a very recent period; yet then did the committee of circuit, under the sanction of Mr. Hastings, raise the rents of the zemindaries to an unheard-of standard; and by the ensuing project of 1781, the whole landed property of the country was put up to a pretended auction; the proprietors were universally deprived of their estates, and banyans, cheats, and adventurers of all sorts, put into possession of their lands. Under this settlement Cantoo Baboo, Mr. Hastings's banyan, held farms to the amount of 135,000*l.* per annum. The directors had ordered the persons composing the committee of circuit to be prosecuted, but Mr. Hastings had ordered the prosecution to be withdrawn. A committee of revenue was subsequently introduced under the influence of Gunga Govind Sing, a notorious and adroit villain, which completed the ruin of the country. When Mr. Hastings came into possession of the Bengal government, he found it a fertile, populous, and prosperous country; it contained a regular gradation of ranks like a pyramid, from a well-ordered yeomanry to sovereign princes: but these distinctions have been broken down—the whole nation has been pounded as it were by the oppression of the government into one mass—and the prince was no otherwise discoverable from the peasant than by the superiority of his sufferings, and the more pungent bitterness of his humiliations. Mr. Francis concluded in these remarkable words:—"my particular labor is now at an end. An unremitting perseverance of thirteen years has at last conducted me to that issue which has been the object of all my efforts. Mr. Hastings must now be impeached—let him have a fair trial—I desire no more. In arriving at that object I have secured every personal purpose that I ever had in view; the reputation of sir John Clavering, colonel Monson, and myself,

myself, is secure; your votes are my authority: the house of commons are my compurgators. The only victory I ever aimed at was to clear my character from foul aspersions, and to establish, as I trust I have done, the integrity of my conduct in the estimation of my country." This charge was confirmed, notwithstanding the unexpected dissent of the minister, by 71 to 55 voices.

On the 9th of May the report made by Mr. Burke from the committee, to whom it had been referred to prepare the articles of impeachment, was confirmed by the house, ayes 175, noes 89. On the following day it was voted that Mr. Hastings be IMPEACHED: and Mr. Burke accordingly, in the name of the house of commons, and of all the commons of Great Britain, repaired to the bar of the house of lords, and impeached Mr. Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors—at the same time acquainted their lordships, that the commons would with all convenient speed exhibit articles against him, and make good the same.

On the 14th another charge respecting misdemeanors in Oude was added to the former by Mr. Burke, and voted without a division. On the same day the articles actually prepared were sent to the lords; and on the 21st Mr. Hastings, being conducted to the bar of that house by the serjeant at arms, was taken into the custody of the black rod, but on the motion of the lord chancellor was admitted to bail—himself in 20,000*l.* and two sureties, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Sumner, in 10,000*l.* each; and he was ordered to deliver in an answer to the articles of impeachment in one month from that time, or upon the second day of the next session of parliament.

On the 30th of May (1787) the king put an end to the present session by a speech, applauding "the measures taken by parliament respecting the reduction of the national debt, and the treaty of navigation and commerce with the most christian king. He spoke of the general tranquillity

tranquillity of Europe, and lamented the DISSENSIONS which unhappily prevailed amongst the STATES of the UNITED PROVINCES." This then is the proper period to pause, and take a retrospective view of the politics of the continent, and of the origin and progress of these dissensions.

If the embarrassments of Great Britain at the return of peace, in consequence of the alarming addition of debt contracted during the war, were very great, those of France it must be confessed were of still greater magnitude. The finances of France during the war had been committed to the management of M. Necker, a Genevan protestant, a man of strict probity, of genuine philanthropy, of extensive knowledge in the detail of affairs, but who, nevertheless, appears to have been destitute of those clear and comprehensive views which distinguish the great and enlightened statesman; and his vanity, ostentation, and egotism formed a great deduction from the aggregate of his virtues. This celebrated financier conceived the romantic and impracticable plan of raising the loans necessary for the service of the war upon the credit of funds to be created by economical savings in the public expenditure. The revenue of France was indeed immense, not perhaps falling short in the gross receipt of twenty-five millions sterling; but the civil, military, and naval establishments of that vast kingdom were also upon a proportionable scale: and if it had been possible, which it certainly was not, by any efforts within the compass of M. Necker's ability, effectually to have counteracted that spirit of extravagance and corruption which had so long pervaded all the departments of government in France, and to have substituted in their stead the order and frugality of his native republic, still an enormous deficiency must ultimately have resulted from a scheme so visionary and chimerical as that of carrying on a war without taxes. At the æra of the peace this was found to be actually the case; and M. Necker, who

who had enraged one party by his attempts, and disappointed the other by his failures, was compelled to resign to M. de Calonne, a man of great talents, but who, immersed in dissipation and intrigue, and neither able nor solicitous to reform the abuses of the government, proposed to supply the present grand deficiency in the revenue in the usual way by new and heavy imposts.

The excessive and notorious derangement of the French finances, and the consequent indisposition of the court of Versailles to involve itself in hostilities with any of the leading powers of Europe, probably emboldened the restless and ambitious spirit of the emperor, who also doubtless relied on the influence of the queen his sister in the cabinet of France, to venture upon measures which the most powerful of his predecessors would have regarded as rash and presumptuous. Taking advantage of the animosity subsisting between the maritime powers, he had during the late war formally cancelled the barrier treaty originally concluded under the guarantee of England, and had dismissed the Dutch garrisons from the frontier towns of the low countries. In the vain expectation of permanent amity with France, he had even dismantled the greater part of those important fortresses, leaving by this means the country wholly exposed, in case of a future rupture, to the inroads of that formidable power.

Elated with the facility with which he had accomplished this object, he, in the autumn of the year 1783, suddenly demanded of the states general the appointment of a commission to meet at Brussels, for the accurate ascertainment of the boundaries of the Dutch and Austrian Netherlands. While this extraordinary demand was under discussion, a detachment of the Austrian troops entered the Dutch territory, and seized upon two small forts in the neighbourhood of Sluys; and a new demand was made of a free navigation of the Scheldt beyond Fort Lillo, as far as the land of Saftingen. Conferences being at length agreed upon

upon to be held at Bruffels, in order to the final settlement of these claims, the plenipotentiaries of the emperor delivered in to those of the states general, May 1784, the entire demands of his imperial majesty, purporting the enlargement of his boundaries on the side of Breda and Bois-le-duc; the demolition of the forts Kruickshank and Frederic-Henry; the inland navigation of the Scheldt as far as Saftingen; the requisition of various sums of money pretended to have been due to the emperor since the beginning of the present century; and the CESSION of the CITY of MÆSTRICHT, and the contiguous district of Outre Meuse, disjoined from the general mass of the Dutch possessions.

The states, astonished and alarmed at these novel claims, were urgent to obtain the mediation of the court of Versailles. The situation of Holland was indeed at this period such as to make all opposition apparently fruitless. The weight which she had been accustomed to derive from her intimate connection and alliance with England was no more; and in consequence of a strange fatality, she was now reduced to the humiliating necessity of resorting for protection to that very power by whom her liberties had been so frequently menaced, and at one time so nearly subverted. Since the termination of the war with England she had been distracted with internal commotions. A great majority of the Dutch nation accused with vehemence the prince of Orange of gross and flagrant partiality to England during the war. It was affirmed that he had *betrayed his country*, in leaving her intentionally destitute of the means of defence; and that he had constantly and systematically counteracted the exertions of those who were earnestly desirous to have carried on the war with vigor and effect. The person by whose counsels the prince of Orange was supposed to be chiefly influenced—Prince Louis of Brunswick, guardian to the stadtholder during his minority, and generalissimo of the Dutch forces—was even said

said to be a pensioner of England ; and so high did the public clamor arise against him, that he found it necessary to resign his offices civil and military, and retire from the country. This was far however from satisfying the disaffected party, which seemed continually to increase as well in numbers as inveteracy. The authority of the prince, as established by the constitution of 1747, was assailed in almost every province, and particularly the great and leading province of Holland, by all the possible modes of attack ; and the very existence of the stadtholderate seemed to have become a question of precarious and problematic import.

In these circumstances it was not wonderful that the emperor, whose rapacity was unrestrained by even the shadow of principle, depending upon the acquiescence of France, again rose in his demands. In what he styled his ultimatum, delivered in August 23, 1784, his imperial majesty observing " that divers difficulties had occurred in the discussion of his claims, and that a speedy termination of those differences was ardently desired by him, offered to depart from his just demand upon the city of Maestricht, and to moderate his other requisitions, in consideration of the free and unlimited navigation of the Scheldt in both branches to the sea. His imperial majesty, not doubting but the states would accept with eagerness so unquestionable a mark of his good will, had thought proper to regard the Scheldt as open, and to declare its navigation free from the date of this paper ; and he concluded, that on the supposition of any insult being offered to the imperial flag in the execution of these ideas he should be obliged to consider it as a formal declaration of war on the part of the republic."

This memorial was as a stroke of thunder to the Dutch nation. The commercial grandeur of Holland had risen upon the ruins of Antwerp ; and though it is probable that, if the free navigation of the Scheldt had been now restored

restored to that once famous mart, the course of trade could not have been easily or speedily diverted from its accustomed channels, the fears of the Dutch were wrought up to the highest pitch of apprehension. The states in their answer protested against this new claim, as the flagrant invasion of a right which they considered as the most valuable of their possessions. In order to establish this demand they observed, "that the emperor must contravene the treaty by which they had been acknowledged as independent states, and also that by which the house of Austria had been put into possession of the Austrian Netherlands. They considered their prosperity, their dignity, and their existence, as linked to the perpetual conservation of this sovereignty, and declared it to be a pretension from which they would never depart."

Early in the month of October (1784) a small vessel sailed from Antwerp, amid the shouts and acclamations of the inhabitants, with the intention of ascertaining this important point. On the arrival of the imperial brigantine before the fort of Lillo, an account of its destination was demanded; on the refusal of the officer to answer, a single ball was fired; and no regard being paid to this intimation, a whole broadside was discharged, and the vessel immediately struck her colors. This resolute proceeding on the part of the Dutch excited the utmost astonishment of the emperor, who had treated the sage remonstrances of his prime minister, prince Kaunitz, on this subject with contempt—repeatedly and peremptorily affirming, "*that the Dutch would never dare to fire.*" The emperor being in Hungary when this intelligence arrived, the prince wrote to his imperial majesty the following laconic letter of information, "*But they have fired.*" Immediately the conferences at Brussels were broken up, the imperial ambassador at the Hague was recalled, and hostile preparations were made on both sides.

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It was at this critical moment that the court of Versailles interposed in a manner the most efficacious to preserve the Dutch nation from the ruin which threatened them. Notwithstanding the alliance which had now for thirty years subsisted between the courts of Vienna and Versailles; notwithstanding the ties of blood which connected the two sovereigns; notwithstanding the pacific disposition of the French monarch, and the financial embarrassments of the government; on this great occasion, all the ancient jealousy of the great rival houses of Bourbon and Austria seemed to revive. A letter written with his most christian majesty's own hand to the emperor, dated November 20, (1784) pointed out the essential distinction between the primary and ultimate demands of the emperor. As to the former, the king of France declared himself neutral; but he protested in the strongest terms against any violation of the rights of the states general respecting the navigation of the Scheldt—a right exercised by them for near one hundred and fifty years under the sanction of a sacred treaty. His most christian majesty exhorted the emperor therefore to listen to the voice of moderation and humanity, and to assent to a renewal of the conferences under his mediation. To enforce this amicable overture a great army was assembled in the vicinity of Luxemburg; the marquis de Verac, who possessed the entire confidence of M. de Vergennes the French minister, was dispatched as ambassador extraordinary to the Hague; and the marshal de Maillebois, an officer of high reputation in the French service, was *permitted* to take the command in chief of the Dutch forces†.

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† On the convening of a cabinet council about this period at Versailles preparatory to the final resolution, the queen of France is reported to have said to the count de Vergennes, as the minister was passing to the council chamber, "Remember, sir, in your deliberations, that the emperor is my brother." The count, casting his eyes on the dauphin, whom the queen then held in her arms, with great happiness replied, "Yes, madam, and I shall also recollect that the dauphin of France is your son."

The emperor now thought proper to declare his acceptance of the proffered mediation, provided the freedom of the Scheldt, *or the cession of Maastricht*, to which he once again condescended to advert, were made the preliminaries of the negotiation. But the Dutch, animated by the avowed protection, and incited no doubt also by the secret suggestions of France, now peremptorily refused to accede to either of these very unequal alternatives. After an interval of decent delay, the emperor with his characteristic inconstancy relinquished both these favorite objects, the latter of which at least, had he never extended his views beyond it, he had once a fair prospect of accomplishing. But, as if eager to recover by his pride the reputation he had lost by his folly, he insisted that the Dutch states should make a public submission, and apologise by a formal embassy for the insult offered to his flag at Lillo.

The barons Wassenaer and Leyden being deputed to the court of Vienna for this purpose, conferences were again opened, and in a short time a treaty of pacification was signed (November 8, 1784), importing that the states should pay the sum of ten millions of florins as an indemnification for the claim of the emperor upon Maastricht and its territory, and as a compensation for the damage done by the late inundations; the inland navigation of the Scheldt was extended to the town of Saftingen, and the forts of Liefkinshoek and Lillo ceded to the emperor.

The inflated and almost ludicrous style of the complimentary address of the Dutch ambassadors at their audience of leave, sufficiently shews the idea entertained by them of the character of the emperor. "May the glorious reign of your imperial majesty (say their excellencies), destined to complete the felicity of your subjects, daily administer to fame the best means to extend and perpetuate your great and awful name! May the æra of Joseph II. like that of TRITUS, TRAJANUS, and MARCUS AURELIUS, your predecessors in the ROMAN EMPIRE, be ever record-

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ed as that of humanity, peace, and the happiness of mankind!"

It is remarkable that England during these transactions looked on with the most perfect indifference, or even with apparent pleasure—never dreaming that her interests were essentially affected by the question relative to the navigation of the Scheldt; and much less was either court or country at this period infected with the *mania* of supposing it necessary or expedient to enter into a war, in order to prevent the people of Flanders from freely enjoying what God and nature had freely bestowed. Nor indeed would the utmost efforts of England probably have availed in opposition to the projects of the emperor, in case of the acquiescence of France.

When a great nation interferes in the concerns of her neighbours, true policy and dignity require not only that the object which she aims to effect be just and important in itself, that it be clearly and distinctly marked, but also, without any excessive or disproportionate exertion, attainable. This was a case in which, from local and other unalterable circumstances, France could interpose, not only with far more propriety, as a guarantee of the treaty of Westphalia, but with infinitely greater effect, than England. And GEORGE III. prompted merely *perhaps* by motives of unappeased resentment, acted precisely the part which the penetration and discretion of an ELIZABETH would have suggested.

The treaty of peace between Holland and the emperor was immediately followed by a treaty of alliance and friendship between Holland and France. This was no doubt an event neither pleasant nor honourable to England; but it was the natural and unavoidable result of the absurd and mischievous politics long ago adopted by the English court, and of the novel situation in which Holland had been consequently placed. But as to any serious inconvenience to be apprehended from this or any other defection of the

same nature, England under a wise system of government, such as had in the main been acted upon since the dismissal of the old execrable administration, might stand alone the envy and admiration of the world.

The business of the Scheldt might be supposed to have engrossed the attention of the emperor; on the contrary, while the issue of it was yet unknown, a negotiation of still greater importance, and of a nature strangely incompatible with the former, was carried on with the elector of Bavaria, for the exchange of that extensive and commodious territory for the whole of the Austrian Netherlands, which were for this purpose to be converted into a kingdom under the ancient and long-since obsolete appellation of Austrasia. This design could not escape the sagacity of the king of Prussia, nor the essential advantage which the house of Austria would derive from the cession of a large and fertile country contiguous to the general mass of its possessions, in lieu of a detached territory expensive and difficult to defend. In order to counteract this new attempt of the court of Vienna, so hostile to the liberty and independency of the Germanic body, a treaty was signed at Berlin by his Prussian majesty, the king of Great Britain as elector of Hanover, and the elector of Saxony, to which the duke of Deux-ponts, the margrave of Anspach, and other princes afterwards acceded. This formidable confederation was expressly affirmed to be intended for maintaining the indivisibility of the empire, the rights of the Germanic body in general, and of the respective states in particular.

In a declaration subsequently issued by the king of Prussia, that monarch insists on the danger to be apprehended from the rising power of Austria, and asserts, "that the addition of so extensive and flourishing a country as Bavaria to the dominions of that ambitious house, must effectually destroy the balance of Germany, if not of Europe—and must end in the annihilation of all the subordinate states which enter into the composition of the Germanic body."

body." The duke of Deux-ponts also, heir to the elector, protested against the alienation of his patrimony; and the court of St. Petersburg shewed itself as formerly decidedly hostile to the annexation of Bavaria to the Austrian dominions. So impracticable did it appear in the face of these impediments to proceed in the execution of their project, that the courts of Vienna and Munich were compelled, in the spring of 1785, publicly to contradict the report, and to assert that the convention between them had no farther object than the adjustment of the limits of their respective countries.

Notwithstanding the dangerous contest in which Holland found herself involved with the court of Vienna, the domestic contentions of the republic suffered no abatement. The party anciently in opposition to the house of Orange, known by the appellation of the *Louvestein* party, and who consisted chiefly of the provincial aristocracies, or rather oligarchies of the union, had been recently reinforced by a heterogeneous coalition with the zealous partisans of democracy, who equally wished for the total annihilation of the stadtholderian influence and authority. On the representation of the deputies of *Haerlem*, respecting the riotous disposition of the populace of the Hague distinguished by their attachment to the stadtholder, the care of the military patrol of that place, vested in the prince of Orange, was transferred to those deputies by a formal resolution of the states of Holland. The prince, after warmly remonstrating against this insult, and vainly insisting upon his claim to the undivided command of the garrison of the Hague, withdrew himself from the seat of government (Sept. 14, 1785), and retired to his palace of *Loo*.

The states of Holland, far from feeling disposed to recede from their resolution, solemnly voted the states and senates of the different provinces to be the undoubted sovereigns, and the stadtholder to be their servant: hence inferring, that the powers so exercised were only delegated,  
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and that the state might resume them whenever it saw sufficient reason ;—concluding, that the entire command of the garrison should hereafter vest in the council committee of the states of Holland.

At this period a memorial was presented to the states general by the ambassador of Prussia, in the name of the king his master, strongly urging the interposition of their high mightinesses, in order that the prince stadtholder might peaceably enjoy the rights and incontestable prerogatives appertaining to his dignity of hereditary stadtholder.

This application produced not the least effect. The states of Holland, who, as became their superior importance, assumed the lead in the opposition to the stadtholder, ordered, as if in contempt of this interference, the arms of the house of Orange to be taken out of the colors of the troops belonging to that province, and that the Swiss guards attendant on the person of the prince should be disbanded.

They towns of Hattem and Elbourg in the province of Guelderland, having manifested a peculiarly refractory and rebellious disposition, the states of Gueldres, in which assembly the Orange interest yet predominated, commissioned the stadtholder to employ military force for the reduction of the burghers. But the states of Holland, Zealand, Overysse and Groningen joined in prohibiting the troops of their respective provinces from acting in this service. The towns in question were however attacked and captured by the prince; and Utrecht, which had deeply imbibed the same sentiments, was, in consequence of their resistance to the states of that province now assembled at Amersfort, expected to be immediately invested. On this intelligence, the states of Holland dispatched a letter to the prince, demanding of him in twenty-four hours an explicit declaration of his intentions. The troops of the province were at the same time ordered to march to the frontier

frontier for the protection of Utrecht, and a *cordon* was formed from Naerden to Schoonhoven. And notwithstanding an explanation and apology from the prince, within the time prescribed, the states of Holland proceeded (Sept. 16, 1786) to the violent resolution of suspending him from his office of captain general of the province, by a majority of sixteen out of nineteen voices of which that assembly is composed.

The prince of Orange on this occasion addressed a long and elaborate letter to the states of Holland. He had expressly said in his former remonstrance, relative to the garrison of the Hague, "We have not the most distant intention to question the superiority of your noble and great mightinesses over the military, as well of the whole province as the garrison of the Hague. Never, says he, could we suppose ourselves invested with a power equal, much less superior, to that of the states over the military, and that we might act according to our own pleasure, and independently of the SOVEREIGN." But he now ventured to assume an higher tone; and declaring "his office of hereditary captain general of Holland and West Friesland to have been secured to him by the unanimous vote of all the members of the state, he affirmed, that as the resolution by which the office had been conferred, passed *nemine contradicente*, it could not, *supposing it to be revocable*, be cancelled or even suspended without the like unanimity."

This sudden haughtiness of language may, without hesitation, be attributed to an event of great moment, which had recently taken place in the death of Frederic III. king of Prussia (August 17, 1786), who was succeeded by his nephew Frederic William, to whom the prince of Orange was nearly allied by marriage to his sister, the princess Wilhelmina of Prussia.

The new monarch, feeling for the situation of his relatives, and eager to make a display of his power, entered with far more zeal into the interests of the prince than his illustrious

illustrious predecessor, who during a reign of forty-six years had excited the admiration of Europe by the greatness of his talents and the splendor of his successes. He had raised Prussia from obscurity and insignificance to the rank of a first-rate power in Europe; and had left his successor in possession of a flourishing kingdom, an immense treasure, and an army of 200,000 men in the highest reputation for courage and discipline.

In a memorial presented by the count de Goertz, his Prussian majesty's ambassador extraordinary to the states general (Sept. 18, 1786), he expresses without reserve "the warm part which he takes in the unhappy dissensions subsisting between some of the provinces and the stadtholder, and the very extraordinary oppressions which that prince is innocently obliged to suffer—and urging that a durable termination may be put to these differences, in order that his serene highness the prince stadtholder may return with honor and propriety to the Hague, and resume his high employments—instituting also upon the great interest he had, as the nearest neighbour of the united provinces, that the government of the republic conformable to the antient constitution should not be changed in any essential point."

A short time previous to the delivery of this paper, a memorial had been presented to the states on the part of the king of England, containing in language somewhat more guarded the same sentiments; protesting indeed against the interference of any foreign power in the internal affairs of the republic, the management and direction of which it is declared to be the wish of his Britannic majesty to preserve uncontrolled in the hands of those to whom it has been committed by the CONSTITUTION."

Notwithstanding this powerful interference in behalf of the prince of Orange, the states of Holland shewed themselves in the highest degree averse from every idea of accommodation. And the states general having at length  
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come to a resolution, notwithstanding the opposition of that great and leading province, to invite the mediation of Great Britain and Prussia—the states of Holland, inflamed with so unauthorised a proceeding, declared themselves determined rather to strike out their names from the union of Utrecht, than to suffer such a measure to receive the sanction of the republic.

The prince of Orange having now removed his court to Nimeguen, an ineffectual negotiation was nevertheless carried on during the winter of 1786-7, through the medium of the count de Goertz and M. de Rayneval the French envoy. Every thing on the breaking up of these conferences wore the face of war. The prince encamped near the city of Utrecht opposite to the *cordon* formed by the troops of Holland. The states general, whose constitutional powers were unhappily too limited and feeble to interpose with efficacy, could do nothing more to avert the calamities which menaced the nation, then enforce by a resolution that article of the union which forbade the troops of the republic from marching into any province without the leave of the states of that province first obtained.

From the commencement of the contest, the incapacity and intractability of the prince of Orange had been very apparent. Head of the house of Nassau, he displayed neither the talents nor virtues which had for ages been supposed attached to that illustrious name. The princess, his consort, was said to possess a much larger share of spirit as well as understanding. In the month of June (1787), for reasons which have never perfectly transpired, her royal highness, then resident at Nimeguen, adopted the bold and hazardous resolution of proceeding in person to the Hague, where the states general were at that time assembled, accompanied only by the baroness de Waffanaer and a few domestics. As might previously be expected, she was arrested in her progress at about a league beyond Schoonhoven, and forced back to Nimeguen. This incident

dent brought matters to a crisis. On the 10th of July a memorial was addressed by the Prussian monarch to the states of Holland, in which he affected to consider the indignity offered to his sister as a personal insult to himself. To avenge this pretended affront, the duke of Brunswick, who commanded the Prussian forces in the contiguous duchy of Cleves, entered Holland at the head of an army consisting of about twenty thousand men on the 13th of September (1787). Notwithstanding the previous probability of this invasion, the consternation of the Dutch nation was extreme, and the country seemed every-where unprepared for resistance. Utrecht, beyond all other cities of the union distinguished for the violence of her democratic zeal, surrendered almost as soon as summoned. The march of the Prussian general bore the appearance of a triumphal procession. While a futile resolve to suspend the office of stadtholder passed the senate of Amsterdam, Gorcum, Dordt, Schoonhoven and other towns in his route submitted tamely to the conqueror. On the seventh day from the commencement of the invasion, the prince of Orange made his public entry into the Hague. Amsterdam only made a shew of resistance: but on the 10th of October that proud capital, now closely invested, opened its gates to the victor. To the astonishment of the world, that republic which maintained a contest of eighty years against the power of Spain, which contended for the empire of the ocean with Great Britain, and which repelled the attacks of Louis XIV. in the zenith of his glory, was over-run by the arms of Prussia in a single month. Such and so dire are the effects which flow from civil discord and disunion! In the whole of this transaction, Prussia acted in intimate and avowed concert with England; and while France was slowly assembling troops in the vicinity of Liege, and the emperor was presenting feeble remonstrances at Berlin, the revolution projected by the stadtholderian faction was carried into complete execution, and the

the stadtholder triumphantly reinstated in all his real and pretended prerogatives.

It is not to be imagined that the court of Versailles saw the termination of this great contest with frigid indifference; but the distracted state of her own affairs, and the increasing discontents and disorders of the kingdom, in a manner compelled her reluctant acquiescence. The projects of the new minister of finance, M. de Calonne, proved unsuccessful and abortive. In the latter end of the year 1785, a loan of 3,330,000*l.* being the acknowledged *deficit* of the current year, was negotiated; which the parliament of Paris, after repeated remonstrances, at last registered only in pursuance of the king's positive commands; at the same time accompanying it with a resolution importing "that public œconomy was the only genuine source of revenue, and the only means of providing for the necessities of the state, and of restoring that credit which borrowing had reduced to the brink of ruin." The king, incensed at their presumption, ordered this resolution to be erased from their records—declaring "that he would never consent that the parliament should so far abuse his confidence and clemency as to make themselves the censors of his administration. He declared himself satisfied with his comptroller-general, and determined on no account to suffer groundless apprehensions to interfere with the execution of plans calculated for the good of the state and the welfare of the nation."

The hostile disposition of the parliament, and the evident impossibility of obtaining their cordial concurrence to the measures in contemplation, determined the minister to adopt a plan more suited to the boldness and extent of his views.

In the month of August 1786, M. de Calonne presented a memorial to the king, representing "the melioration of the finances to be essentially connected with public order; and averring that what the national benefit required

quired could not be effected by partial operations, and that the reparation of the whole was necessary to prevent the ruin of the whole. Of consequence, the project he had formed embraced all the parts of the monarchy, and was intended to bring them to a closer union. It would be an inexhaustible source of happiness for the people of France ; it would set the monarch forever at rest respecting the situation of his finances ; *it would raise his POWER higher than that of the most prosperous of his ancestors*, and enrol his name with those of the most virtuous and enlightened legislators. In fine, what induced him to conjure his majesty to adopt it was, that out of the circle of this reformation he could foresee nothing but calamity and ruin."

This magnificent and wonder-working plan was no other than to convene by royal authority and appointment, after the example of antient times, an assembly of the most considerable and enlightened persons in the kingdom, under the denomination of NOTABLES, by whose influence and under whose sanction "a reformation might," to use the words of M. de Calonne, "be effected of whatever was vicious in the constitution of the state." The minister accompanied this proposal with a specification of various details, indicating a vigorous and comprehensive mind penetrated with a clear conviction of the necessity of a radical reform in the state, so far at least as related to that detestable aggregate mass of extortion and oppression which assumed the lofty appellation of the national system of finance. Amongst the new regulations recommended by M. de Calonne, were the equalization of the *vingtièmes* or territorial revenue—the abolition of the *corvée*—the establishment of an uniform *tariff* throughout all the provinces of the kingdom—the alleviation of the odious *gabelle*—the extinction of the feudal rights as vested in the crown—the suppression or melioration of the forest laws—and the application of the royal demesne lands to the service of the public.

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This memorial was received by the king with approbation; and before the termination of the year summonses were issued accordingly for the meeting of the assembly of NOTABLES at Versailles, on the 22d of February 1787. It consisted of one hundred and forty-four persons, amongst whom were seven princes of the blood, nine dukes and peers of France, eight field marshals, eight counsellors of state, and eleven bishops and archbishops. The remaining members were chiefly selected from the different parliaments and magistracies of the kingdom.

The convention of NOTABLES was opened in great state by the king in person, with a speech from the throne, in which he declared "that they had been chosen by him from the different orders of the state, to impart to them his designs, and to receive from them the observations of which they might think them susceptible. This, said the monarch, has been the custom of many of my predecessors, and particularly of the CHIEF of my FAMILY, whose name remains still dear to every Frenchman, and whose example I shall always be proud to make the rule of my conduct. His majesty then in general terms stated the views by which he was actuated—the IMPROVEMENT of the REVENUE—the equalization of taxes—the liberation of commerce—and expressed the fullest confidence in the zeal with which they were animated for his service." This was followed by a long and elaborate harangue from M. de Calonne, in which he accused his predecessor M. Necker of leaving at his dismissal from office an arrear of six hundred and eighty-four millions of livres totally unprovided for. The difference subsisting between the annual revenue and the annual expenditure he estimated at eighty millions. "It is impossible," said this minister, "to suffer the state to remain in the constant and imminent danger, to which a deficiency such as the present exposes it—impossible to go on year after year, applying palliatives and expedients, which though they may retard the crisis for a time are sure to render it  
more

more fatal at last." The minister proceeds to develop his plan for restoring energy and stability to the state, by a grand reform of its abuses, of which he exhibits an interesting and curious detail. In summing up the aggregate of this account, and in solving the grand question, why these intolerable abuses and oppressions have been transmitted from reign to reign, and from age to age, he thus with flowing eloquence expresses himself: "It was not in the bosom of ignorance and confusion, whose veil over-shadowed the times of our first kings—it was not when kings, insecure upon their thrones, were entirely occupied in repelling the continual usurpations of over-grown subjects—it was not in the midst of the disorder and anarchy of the feudal system, when a band of petty tyrants issuing from their castles committed the most atrocious depredations—it was not when the rage for crusades, inflamed by the double enthusiasm of religion and glory, carried into the other hemisphere the strength, the gallantry, and the misfortunes of France—it was not when a prince surnamed AUGUSTUS recovered the principal dismemberments of the kingdom, and augmented its power and splendor; nor when the gloomy politics of one of his successors, by giving extension to a municipal government, prepared the means of uniting in the hand of the sovereign all the power of the public strength; nor when the monarch the most eager after glory and the bravest of knights contended with a rival sovereign for the renown they both acquired at the expence of their people—it was not in those turbulent and inauspicious times, when fanaticism, rending the bosom of the state, filled it with horror and calamity; nor when that good king so dear to Frenchmen conquered his kingdom at the point of his sword, and was taken up in adjusting the long disorders and the disastrous effects of the civil wars—it was not when all the energy of an able and formidable minister was concentrated in the double design of restraining the ambition

ambition of a power become formidable to Europe, and of securing the tranquillity of France by establishing the monarchical authority; neither was it under that brilliant reign, when the beneficent intentions of a great monarch were too often thwarted by ruinous wars, when the state was impoverished by victories, while the kingdom was depopulated by persecution; where so much care was bestowed upon giving every thing an air of grandeur, that the solid prosperity of the state was always neglected—in short, it was not before the monarchy had extended its limits to the points nature had ordained to bound them, before she had arrived at her maturity, and the calm both within and without was securely established by the wisdom and moderation of her sovereign, that it was possible to indulge a thought of reforming the defects of the constitution, and of endeavouring to render the general administration more uniform.”

That the patriotic professions of the king and of the minister, in regard to the general reform of abuses, were at this period not wholly insincere, may be reasonably inferred from their anxious desire to be relieved from those pecuniary embarrassments, which were by no milder or easier means to be surmounted.

The interests of the crown and of the people, at this crisis, alike required that limits should be placed to the oppression of the PRIVILEGED ORDERS, who constituted in France as it were a nation within a nation. But every idea of fixing legal bounds to the prerogative of the monarch was rejected with indignation. It was not to derive information from their wisdom, and much less to be controlled by their authority, that this assembly had been convened. The obvious and sole intent of the court was to carry its own preconcerted plans into effect, under the sanction of this phantom of a national representation.

In order to preclude even the shadow of opposition, M. de Calonne had with such admirable adroitness of artifice organized

organized this assembly, that forty-four suffrages should to all efficient purposes constitute the majority of one hundred and forty-four. The assembly was with this view divided into seven sections or chambers, over each of which a prince of the blood presided. Voting by sections, the majority of four would of course be accounted as the majority of the whole, although had the votes been individually taken, the majority might very possibly be converted into an insignificant minority. Notwithstanding these precautions, so difficult of restraint are the spirit of ambition and the love of power, that the NOTABLES soon displayed a very refractory disposition. Numerous objections were started to the plan laid before them. To the new territorial impost they positively refused their concurrence, unless the accounts and estimates of the government were submitted to their inspection. This was refused with disdain; and the king caused it to be signified to them, "that he was determined to introduce the *impôt territorial*, and that it therefore became them to debate, not the principle of the measure, but the most equitable form it could assume." This only rendered the discontent of the assembly violent and general. It was said, that the minister had convoked them merely to serve as a battery, from which to play off his artillery against the parliaments, and oblige them to register the plans he adopted. The enemies of M. de Calonne seized with eagerness this favorable opportunity to effect his ruin. The count de Vergennes, who had powerfully supported in the cabinet the authority and credit of M. Necker, had expired a few days only before the meeting of the NOTABLES. The marshal de Castries, minister of the marine, the baron de Breteuil, master of the household, and M. de Miro-mesnil, keeper of the seals, all of the queen's party, were active in the design, in which they were zealously assisted by the numerous friends of Mr. Necker. In the midst of their investigations, and while M. de Calonne was apparently



parently unsuspecting of danger, the assembly was adjourned from the 5th to the 12 of April for the Easter recess; and on the 8th that minister was dismissed from his employments. Nevertheless, that the triumph of his enemies might not be complete, M. de Miromesnil was at the same time, conformably to the weak and wavering policy of the monarch, commanded to resign the seals. The public clamor and odium rising high against M. de Calonne, whom it was now the fashion to represent as the most extravagant and profligate of ministers, he was exiled by the king to his estate in Lorraine; and he soon afterwards thought it expedient to take refuge in foreign parts from the inveterate rage of his enemies.

M. de Calonne was succeeded, after a short interval, by M. Lomenie de Brienne, archbishop of Toulouse—a leading member of the assembly of notables, and of great popularity in the kingdom at large, as an undaunted advocate and assertor of the principles of universal liberty. The sacrifice of M. de Calonne produced no concessions in favor of the court. The assembly of notables, in their subsequent sitting, declared themselves utterly incompetent either to suggest different taxes, or to adopt and sanction those which had been proposed. The views of the court being thus finally frustrated, the assembly was dissolved (May 25, 1787), with a cold acknowledgment from the sovereign of the services which they had rendered to the public; and the archbishop of Toulouse entered upon his office with the prospect of encountering difficulties still more insuperable than those which had proved too mighty to be overcome by the far superior ability of his celebrated predecessor.

It is not wonderful that, things being thus circumstanced, no vigorous measures were adopted by France to counteract the united interference of England and Prussia in the affairs of Holland. In the month of July (1787), the states of Holland presented to the states general a proposition for soliciting the me-

diation of the court of Versailles; soon after which, the French ambassador presented also a memorial to the states general, declaring the king his master to be highly sensible of this mark of the confidence of the republic, and ready to co-operate by every means in his power for the restoration of harmony and peace. So late as the month of September, France tardily professed her intention of assisting the Dutch, in case they were attacked by any foreign power. This only animated the court of London to act with the greater spirit and decision, and vigorous naval preparations were made to support the king of Prussia, in opposition to the menacing declarations of France. But the object of the Prussian expedition being accomplished in a much shorter space of time than could have been previously imagined, the court of Versailles found itself, probably not without a secret satisfaction, disengaged from all obligations. The duke of Dorset, ambassador at Paris, in consequence of the events which had taken place, presented (October 27th) a memorial to the king of France, signifying, that "no subject of discussion, much less of contest, now remaining between the two courts, he was authorised to ask, whether it was the intention of his most christian majesty to carry into effect the notification made by his most christian majesty's plenipotentiary, which, by announcing that succors would be given to Holland, had occasioned the naval armaments on the part of his Britannic majesty, which armaments have been reciprocal. If the court of Versailles is disposed to explain herself satisfactorily on this subject, the ambassador proposes, that all warlike preparations should be discontinued, and that the navies of the two nations should be again placed on the footing of the peace establishment, as it stood on the 1st of January of the present year." To this memorial the count de Montmorin, the new minister for foreign affairs in France, replied on the very same day, in a style of exemplary

emplary forbearance and moderation, “ that the intention of his majesty not being, *and never having been*, to interfere by force in the affairs of Holland, the communication made to the court of London, on the 16th of last month, having had no other object than to announce to that court an intention, the motives of which no longer exist, especially since the king of Prussia has imparted his resolution ; his majesty makes no scruple to declare, that he will not give any effect to the declaration above mentioned ; and agrees with pleasure to the proposal of mutually disarming, made on the part of his Britannic majesty.”

Thus happily and honorably for England did this important business terminate. Foreign powers were astonished to see that country, which had a few years since been apparently reduced to the verge of ruin under an administration pre-eminently odious and contemptible, re-assuming her rank among the nations of Europe, and attaining to a visible superiority over that haughty and ambitious rival, whose recent success was now seen to be dearly purchased by her consequent alarming and inextricable embarrassments.

The parliament of Great Britain assembled on the 27th of Nov. 1787. The king remarked, “ that at the close of the last session he had informed them of the concern with which he observed the disputes unhappily subsisting in the republic of the united provinces. Their situation soon afterwards became more critical and alarming. The king of Prussia having demanded satisfaction for the insult offered to the princess of Orange his sister, the party which had USURPED the government applied to the most christian king for assistance ; and that prince having notified to his majesty his intention of granting their request, the king did not hesitate to declare that he could not remain a quiet spectator, and gave immediate orders for augmenting his forces both by sea and land ; and in the course of this transaction he had concluded a subsidiary

treaty with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel. In the mean time the rapid success of the duke of Brunswick enabled the provinces to deliver themselves from the OPPRESSION under which they labored; and all subjects of contest being thus removed, an amicable explanation had taken place between the courts of London and Versailles."

This was the language rather of a zealous partisan of the house of Orange, than of a great monarch, who, by a dignified and seasonable interposition, had rescued a country from ruin. It is inconceivable how the existing government of Holland could with any color of justice be stigmatized as an *usurpation*; for by the constitution of that country the prince of Orange as stadtholder was not a sovereign, but a subject possessing no share of the legislative power; and though by the *formula* of 1747 the office was declared hereditary, it was not therefore irrevocable any more than the hereditary offices of earl marshal or great chamberlain under the English constitution. And the oppressions alluded to in the speech were plainly nothing else than the usual severities inflicted upon those who presumed to resist the mandates of the supreme government. But in the recent measures adopted by the English court there were, notwithstanding this flagrant impropriety of language, so much energy, and at the same time so much practical wisdom, that lesser objections were absorbed and lost in the general merit of the transaction. To the grand proposition—"that it is contrary to the rights of nations, and a violation of the fundamental principles of political justice, for one nation to interfere in the internal concerns of another"—it must suffice to reply that however incontrovertible this maxim may be deemed as a general truth, an interference attended with consequences thus eminently beneficial must be allowed, like other necessary exceptions from general rules, to deserve not pardon merely, but praise.

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The addresses in answer to the speech were voted with great unanimity in both houses; and the minister received from the leaders of opposition, no less than his own partisans, the most liberal commendations for his spirited and judicious conduct. The subsidy to Hesse, by which twelve thousand men were at a vast expence retained for a term of years in the service of Britain, passed without a dissentient vote; and in a short time treaties of amity and alliance were concluded between the courts of London, Berlin, and the Hague, by which the two former guaranteed the stadtholderate in perpetuity to the serene house of Orange, as an essential part of the constitution of the united provinces.

By the treaty between the kings of Great Britain and Prussia, each of the high contracting powers engages, in case of attack, to furnish the other with a succor of sixteen thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, or an equivalent in money, within the term of two months from the date of the requisition. Thus was Britain once again fatally entangled in the intricate and inextricable toils of continental engagements.

The army establishment, which had been reduced from seventy to sixty-four regiments at the termination of the war, was now at the motion of the minister raised to the customary complement, notwithstanding the vigorous opposition of Mr. Fox, under whose administration the reduction had taken place, and who justly boasted that he was the first minister since the revolution who had been accused of establishing too small a standing army in time of peace. A very great naval promotion had also taken place, in the contemplation of a war with France; in which it was remarkable that sixteen captains had been selected for flags, while a much greater number of officers, several of whom were men of the most distinguished gallantry and merit, had been unaccountably passed over in silence and neglect.

In consequence of this injurious partiality a motion was made in the house of commons, "that the house should resolve itself into a committee to enquire into the conduct of the admiralty on the business of the late promotion." This motion was destined to encounter the vehement opposition of Mr. Pitt, who declared, "that if this resolution passed, the next thing he presumed would be to resolve that the members of that house were better judges of naval concerns than professional men at the head of the marine department." To this Mr. Fox justly replied, that this argument, if admitted in its full extent, would effect the total annihilation of the constitutional powers of parliamentary control. If a complaint were lodged against the conduct of a judge, it might be said, "What do you know of the law? Leave it to the courts below—and thus of every other department in army, church, and state." Upon a division the motion was negatived in a house of near three hundred members by a majority of seventeen voices only. And the first lord of the admiralty, lord Howe, became upon this occasion the subject of very severe and general censure and reproach. His lordship soon afterwards resigned his office, and was succeeded by the earl of Chatham.

Nearly at the same time the earl of Mansfield resigned the chief justiceship of England, which he had held with high and undiminished reputation for the long period of thirty-two years, to the attorney general, sir Lloyd Kenyon, created lord Kenyon.

Perpetual disputes having arisen, as had been foreseen and foretold, between the two boards of direction and control, established by Mr. Pitt's India regulation bill, the minister thought proper in the course of the session to bring in his famous DECLARATORY ACT, by which various new and important powers were conferred on the board of control, under pretext of explaining and determining the sense of the former bill. This measure met with a most animat-  
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ed and formidable opposition. Colonel Barré protested that he had from the first discerned the traces of a system of Indian patronage, of which he believed the bill under discussion to be a great advance to the final completion; and if it should be suffered to pass, a fatal stab would be given to the constitution.

Mr. Sheridan called upon the house to compare the power of Mr. Fox's commissioners with those which were now asserted to belong to the board of control. Lord Fitzwilliam could not send out a dispatch; he could neither declare war, nor make peace, in India; he could neither collect the revenues of the company, nor apply them to the purposes he should think proper, without having first the pleasure of the king signified to him through the medium of the secretary of state. The board of control could do all this. The minister had now violated that compact with the company on which he originally and professedly stood—how then could he escape the ignominy of deliberately breaking his most solemn engagements?

Mr. Burke desired to be informed by administration, "whether, when they brought in the act of 1784, and complained that Mr. Fox's bill took too much, they had honestly stated that all they meant to take was the military power, the political direction, the management of the revenue, and as much as they could get of the commerce? The question then to have put to the house would have been, in whose hands they were willing this power should be entrusted? In the hands of seven of the most respectable men in the kingdom, of parliamentary appointment, or with the shreds and remnants of office? The public had been at that time infatuated, hurried on to madness. The mob of 1784 had destroyed the house of commons, and in so doing they had destroyed the palladium of their privileges; but he now indulged the hope of seeing the house rise like a phoenix regenerated from its ashes." The question of commitment was carried by a majority of fifty-seven voices

voices only, and on being carried into the house of lords it experienced a second opposition scarcely less violent than the first. It passed at length, accompanied with a protest signed by sixteen peers, in which the declaratory bill was reprobated as friendly to corrupt intrigue and cabal—hostile to all good government—and abhorrent to the principles of our constitution. The patronage of the company was said to be enjoyed by the commissioners in the worst of all possible forms, and without that responsibility which was the natural security against malversation and abuse. In some degree to palliate this odious measure, by which the company were for ever deprived of all efficient authority in India, they were empowered by a subsequent bill to borrow for the relief of their financial embarrassments the sum of 1,200,000*l.* for which, notwithstanding the *flourishing condition* of their affairs, they stood in immediate and urgent necessity.

In the early part of the session the great India delinquent Mr. Hastings had delivered in his answer to the impeachment of the commons, who immediately proceeded to the appointment of a committee of managers to make good the same. When Mr. Francis had been in the last session proposed as one of the committee to prepare the articles, he had been objected to on the ground of the personal animosity known to subsist between him and Mr. Hastings, and which had been unfortunately productive of an encounter, wherein the life of Mr. Francis had been imminently endangered.

Mr. Fox on the present occasion again moved the house that the name of Mr. Francis be added to the list of managers. He urged, "that the house were not fitting as judges of Mr. Hastings—not even in the capacity of grand jurors; the bill had been found, and they were now become his accusers and prosecutors. Did it disqualify a man from acting as an accuser, that he was animated with an honest indignation against the crimes and the criminal  
whom



whom he attempted to bring to justice? The enmity which Mr. Francis cherished against Mr. Hastings was not a private but a public enmity, founded on a just sense of the abuses he had committed, and the trust he had perverted. Mr. Francis had with infinite application and ability developed, by means of his local and personal knowledge, the whole mystery of Indian corruption; he had enforced it on the reluctant conviction of that house. Would the house, now they had adopted the accusation, and made it their own, prevent its author from supporting it at the bar of the house of lords, where only he could support it with effect?"

Mr. Francis himself with great dignity and animation entered into a general vindication of his character and conduct. "Upon his return from India he had been called upon, he said, to give evidence before a committee of the house of commons. Could he without treachery to the public refuse every information in his power? To act in the capacity of a whispering adviser, or an obscure and covert witness, he disdained. In his own opinion, and in that of men of the highest reputation whom he had consulted, he acted far more honorably in declaring himself the responsible accuser of Mr. Hastings—in avowing his principles, and abiding by their consequences. He was happy to find that the objection against him implied no imputation upon his character, no suspicion upon his actions. He trusted that no one would think it possible that he meant to solicit the house to alter their resolution. He owed, indeed, every assistance in his power to carry into effect the task now undertaken. Exclusively of that consideration, what could he desire better than to be excused from any farther concern in this toilsome, invidious, and most unthankful office?"

Mr. Pitt contented himself with saying, "that the question was in his opinion a question of feeling, and not of argument; and he could not reconcile to his ideas of propriety

priety or delicacy the appointment of a member as the representative of the house in this business, who was distinguished from all others by the personal contest in which he had been engaged with the accused." This drew down the indignation of Mr. Burke. "Was it fit or becoming, he asked, for a legislator, in a great and important question, to say that his feelings compelled him to abandon his arguments?—that his delicacy was offended by rational investigation? What was delicacy, but at best a superadded flower to virtue—an ornament, the presence or absence of which was alike indifferent to the substance? Delicacy and feeling might be proper terms to express the sensations excited by the exertions of an opera singer, but they were an insult to the solemnity and magnitude of parliamentary deliberation." At length the house divided on the motion of Mr. Fox, ayes 62, noes 122.

This decision gave extreme offence to the committee of managers, who expressed, in a letter to Mr. Francis, the high sense they entertained of his merits and services. "They had perused," they said, "with great attention, the records of the company, and they had found there, on the part of Mr. Francis, wise and steady principles of government, an exact obedience to the authority placed over him, an inflexible integrity in himself, and a firm resistance to all corrupt practices in others; crowned by that uniform benevolent attention to the rights, properties, and welfare of the natives, which had been the leading object in his appointment. Such a conduct, so tried, acknowledged, and recorded, demanded their fullest confidence; and such were the qualities that had excited their wish for his assistance." Thus nobly and unequivocally was the character of this distinguished politician, patriot, and friend to mankind, vindicated in the view of present and of future times.

Next in dignity, and next in the general estimation in delinquency, to Mr. Hastings, was Sir Elijah Impey, chief justice

justice of the supreme court established by the regulating act of 1773; against whom it was now determined to institute a similar process. Six articles of impeachment were accordingly in the early part of the session exhibited to the house by sir Gilbert Elliot; of which the conduct of the chief justice in the memorable business of Nund-comar constituted the first. His decisions in the Patna and Cossijura causes, his acceptance of an employment, contrary to his OATH, in the native court styled the sudder dewannee adaulet, to be held during the pleasure of the governor and council, and his proceedings in concert with the governor respecting the affairs of Benares and Oude, furnished ample materials for the remaining charges. On the 4th of February, 1788, sir Elijah was permitted to make his defence at the bar of the house; which he performed at great length, and with great ability—confining himself however entirely to the charge relating to Nund-comar. For he remarked, with the artfulness of practised and technical subtilty, “that his mind had been so much deranged by the magnitude of that charge, that he found it impossible to exert himself in reply to the other accusations till the question of Nund-comar was decided. He could not bear to live under the imputation of MURDER; but if he were acquitted of *that*, he should consider all the other charges as frivolous and unimportant.” Being requested to leave the minutes of the defence, as Mr. Hastings had before done, upon the table, the chief justice declared it to be impossible—having *unfortunately* spoken extempore.

On the 28th of April (1788), sir Gilbert Elliot entered upon his summary of the charge. He enlarged upon the “absurdity of enforcing a law founded upon the local customs of one country against the natives of another. To extend by a constructive interpretation the English law against forgery, unknown on the other side the Tweed, to India, was no less preposterous than to try the great mogul

mogul and the viziers of his court upon the English statute of bigamy. He stated in the strongest terms the expediency and equity of at least granting a respite of the sentence, since conviction had been obtained by evidence the most suspicious, at a time when Nund-comar was in the act of bringing forward an accusation against the governor general, and when it was evident that the execution of the sentence could not take place without exciting horror and dismay throughout Hindostan. He affirmed, that the blood of the MURDERED RAJAH was upon their heads, and still crying for vengeance on the man who had thus stained and crimsoned the spotless ermine of justice." The defence of sir Elijah Impey had, however, engaged and pre-occupied the minds of the house. And it must be confessed, that the chief justice had so skilfully entrenched himself behind the impregnable ramparts of the law—the letter of which, admitting the extension of the system of English jurisprudence to India, he in the whole of this transaction carefully avoided overstepping—that it was difficult to pronounce him in a legal sense guilty, however flagitious his conduct might appear when brought to the test of free and rational investigation. The lawyers in the house seemed to consider it as a common cause, and exerted themselves with peculiar ardor in his behalf; and Mr. Pitt declaring himself convinced of the innocence of the accused, the motion of sir Gilbert Elliot was on the division negatived by a majority of 73 to 65 voices. Such was the effect of this discouraging circumstance, that the farther consideration of the impeachment was adjourned over the session, and it has never yet been resumed. It seems extraordinary, that the acceptance of an appointment contrary to his oath of office, under the governor and council, by the chief justice, which was the immediate ground of his recall, was not made the leading article of the impeachment, as upon this head, all the ingenuity of the profession,

on, excellent and admirable as it is, could have afforded no colorable defence.

The trial of Mr. Hastings commenced on the 15th of February (1788); Westminster-hall being fitted up for the purpose with great magnificence. Mr. Burke was no less than four successive days in making his preliminary speech, which was filled with vehement invective, with much rhetorical exaggeration, and with matter wholly extraneous to the subject of the impeachment. Men of plain sense, whose object was TRUTH, and who desired only a clear and simple summary of facts, sighed over these eccentricities and follies; and augured ill of the final success of the impeachment from so injudicious an outset. If approbation, however, was wanting, the place was amply supplied by admiration; and the speech was extolled by the parasitical flatterers of Mr. Burk, as a more than Ciceronian effort of eloquence.

On the 22d of February, the Benares charge was opened by Mr. Fox; and it was concluded on the 25th by Mr. Grey, member for the county of Northumberland, whose talents had attracted at a very early period of life, in an eminent degree, the attention of the house, of which he was soon perceived destined to be one of the chief and most distinguished ornaments.

On the 15th of April, the charge relative to the Begums of Oude was brought forward in a very able manner by Mr. Adam; and the evidence on this charge was summed up by Mr. Sheridan, in a speech which lasted five days, and of which the more vigorous compression only was wanting to the perfection of eloquence.

The last business of importance which engaged the attention of parliament, was a bill brought into the house by sir William Dolben, member for the university of Oxford, a man of the highest integrity and respectability, to regulate the transportation of slaves from the coast of Africa to the West Indies. At the beginning of the year, a multitude

titude of petitions had been presented from the different towns, cities, and counties of the kingdom, imploring in earnest and affecting terms the abolition of that superlatively nefarious and detestable traffic. A motion on the subject of these petitions was expected to be made by Mr. Wilberforce, member for Yorkshire; but in consequence of the long-protracted and unfortunate indisposition of that gentleman, Mr. Pitt on the 9th of May moved a resolution, importing that the house would early in the next session proceed to take into consideration the state of the slave trade. The bill of Sir William Dolben, which was intended merely to establish a certain reasonable proportion between the number of slaves and the tonnage of the ships, was violently and obstinately opposed by petitions from the merchants of London and Liverpool concerned in the African trade. Counsel being therefore engaged, and witnesses examined, it appeared in evidence at the bar of the house, that five feet six inches in length, and sixteen inches in breadth, was the average space allotted to each slave. The lower deck of the vessel was entirely covered with bodies. The space between the floor of that deck and the roof above, in height about five feet eight inches, was divided by a platform, also covered with human bodies. The slaves were chained two and two by their hands and feet, and by means of ring-bolts fastened to the deck. In that sultry climate, their allowance was a pint of water each, *per diem*; and they were usually fed twice a day with yams and horse-beans. After meals they were compelled by the whip to jump in their irons, which by the slave-dealers was called dancing. They had not, as was emphatically stated, when stowed together, so much room as a man in his *coffin*, either in length or breadth. They drew their breath with laborious and anxious efforts, and many died of mere suffocation. The customary mortality of the voyage exceeded seventeen times the usual estimate of human life. A slave ship, when full fraught with this cargo

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cargo of wretchedness and abomination, exhibited at once the extremes of human depravity and human misery.

Mr. Pitt, who on various occasions has dropped the statesman to assume the nobler character of the philanthropist, declared with indignant eloquence, "that if, as had been asserted by the members for Liverpool, the trade could not be carried on in any other manner, he would retract what he had said on a former day, and, waving every farther discussion, give his instant vote for the annihilation of a traffic thus shocking to humanity. He trusted that the house, being now in possession of such evidence as was never before exhibited, would endeavour to extricate themselves from the guilt and remorse which every man ought to feel for having so long over-looked such cruelty and oppression." The bill was carried up June 18th to the house of lords, where it was fated to encounter the determined opposition of lord Thurlow. His lordship said, that the bill was full of inconsistency and nonsense. The French had lately offered premiums to encourage the African trade, and the natural presumption was, that we ought to do the same. This measure appeared to him very like a breach of parliamentary faith. As to himself, he scrupled not to say, "that if the fit of philanthropy which had slept so many years had been suffered to sleep one summer longer, it would have appeared to him more wise than to take up the subject in this disjointed manner." The duke of Chandos ventured to predict a general insurrection of the negroes in the West indies in consequence of the agitation of the present question. And lord Sydney, who had once ranked amongst the friends of liberty, expressed in warm terms his admiration of the system of the slave laws established in Jamaica, and saw no room for any improvement. The bill was defended by the duke of Richmond and marquis Townshend in a manner which did honor to their understanding and feelings: and it finally passed by a considerable majority.

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The king put an end to the session July 11, 1788, by a speech from the throne, in which he complimented the two houses on their attention and liberality. " His faithful subjects had every reason, as he affirmed, to expect the continuance of the blessings of peace ; and the engagements which he had recently formed with the king of Prussia and the states general of the united provinces, would, he trusted, promote the security and welfare of his own dominions, and contribute to the general tranquillity of Europe."

Soon after the recess of parliament, the king, who had been for some time rather indisposed, was advised by his physicians to try the mineral waters of Cheltenham, which he was believed to drink in too profuse a quantity. His health appeared nevertheless, during his residence there, greatly established ; and he amused himself and gratified his people by various excursions in the vicinity of that place, displaying on these occasions much condescension and affability, and being every where received with loud acclamations.

On his return to Windsor, late in the summer, his illness returned with new and alarming symptoms. By the end of October, it could no longer be concealed that the malady of the king was of a nature peculiarly afflictive and dreadful. A mental derangement had taken place, which rendered him totally incapable of public business.

The parliament had been prorogued to the 20th of November ; a few days previous to which, a circular letter was issued by the ministers, in which the impracticability of a farther prorogation was signified, and the attendance of the members earnestly requested. Parliament being accordingly assembled, the state of the king's health was formally notified to the house of peers by the lord chancellor, and to the commons by Mr. Pitt ; and as the session of parliament could not be opened in the regular mode, an adjournment of fourteen days was recommended ; at the end  
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of which term, if the king's illness should unhappily continue, it would be incumbent upon them to enter into the immediate consideration of the state of public affairs. Upon the re-assembling of parliament, December the 4th, a report of the board of privy council was presented to the two houses, containing an examination of the royal physicians; and it was properly suggested, that considering the extreme delicacy of the subject, and the dignity of the person concerned, parliament would do well to rest satisfied without any more direct and express information, especially as the examinations of council had been taken upon oath, which the house of commons had no power to administer.

The situation of affairs was at this period singularly critical. The prince of Wales, into whose hands the government of the country was soon likely to fall, retained a deep resentment against the present ministers for their recent conduct respecting him, and took no pains to conceal his decided predilection for the person and politics of Mr. Fox. This distinguished leader, on the earliest intelligence of the king's indisposition, had returned from a summer excursion to the Continent with incredible expedition; and in contemplation of an approaching change, a new arrangement of administration was already believed to be formed, consisting of the principal members of the former coalition ministry, lord North only excepted, and of which the duke of Portland was to be once more the ostensible head. The policy of opposition seemed evidently repugnant to every idea of unnecessary delay. Yet doubts were unaccountably started by Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and others of the same party, whether parliament could in this momentous case dispense with that sort of evidence on which they had been accustomed to proceed. The validity of the objection was very faintly contested, and a committee of twenty-one persons in each house, after no long debate, appointed to examine and report the sentiments of

the royal physicians. The report of the committee was laid upon the table of the house of commons on the 10th of December; when a motion was made by Mr. Pitt, for the appointment of another committee to inspect the journals for precedents of such proceedings as had been adopted in former instances, when the sovereign authority was suspended by sickness, infirmity, or any other cause.

Mr. Fox, sensible perhaps of his former error, now opposed with energy the present motion, as calculated only for delay. With respect to precedents, there were, he said, notoriously none which applied to the present instance; and he affirmed, that all which was requisite to their ultimate decision, had been obtained by the report now lying upon their table. By that report they had ascertained the incapacity of the sovereign. And he advanced as a proposition deducible from the principles of the constitution, and the analogy of the law of hereditary succession, that whenever the sovereign was incapable of exercising the functions of his high office, the heir apparent, if of full age and capacity, had as indisputable a claim to the exercise of the executive authority, in the name and on the behalf of the sovereign, during his incapacity, as in the case of his natural demise."

Mr. Pitt, eager to seize any occasion of postponing, by the intervention of extraneous questions, the ultimate decision, immediately rose with much apparent warmth, and declared, "that the assertion which had been made by Mr. Fox was little short of TREASON against the CONSTITUTION. And he pledged himself to prove, that the heir apparent, in the instances in question, had no more right to the exercise of the executive power than ANY OTHER PERSON" and that it belonged entirely to the two remaining branches of the legislature, to make such a provision for supplying the temporary deficiency as they might think proper." Thus was this famous question at issue between these two great political rivals; in which it was remarkable,

ble, that Mr. Fox, the great advocate of the rights of the people, became the defender of prerogative; and Mr. Pitt, who had been loudly accused of deserting the principles of liberty, appeared in the advantageous light of their intrepid and zealous assertor. All those popular arguments and primary axioms of government, on which the friends of freedom so justly delight to dwell, were upon this occasion urged by Mr. Pitt with the greatest success. "When the regular exercise of the powers of government was from any cause suspended, to whom could the right of providing a remedy for the existing defect devolve but to the people, from whom all the powers of government originated? To assert an inherent right in the prince of Wales to assume the government, was virtually to revive those exploded ideas of the divine and indefeasible authority of princes, which had so justly sunk into contempt and almost into oblivion. Kings and princes derive their power from the people, and to the people alone, through the organ of their representatives, did it appertain to decide in cases for which the constitution had made no specific or positive provision." In vain was every effort attempted to stem the tide of popular opinion, which ran with no less violence at this crisis in favor of Mr. Pitt, than at the commencement of his ministerial career. In vain was it urged, that the primary principles of government were not the subjects of the present controversy. The question was simply, to determine what the analogy of the constitution required in a case wherein no recourse could be had to authoritative precedents or to legal decisions. The constitutional authority of parliament to provide for the safety of the nation, in an exigency like the present, must be universally acknowledged. But the doubt was, whether, in the appointment of a regent, they were to exercise a judicial or an elective authority. If the former, the business was at an end; for they must necessarily *adjudge* the regency to the prince. But if they were

to exercise an arbitrary elective power, Mr. Pitt might make himself the competitor of the prince of Wales. Upon the regent of their ELECTION they would undoubtedly, as was the practice in all elective governments, impose such limitations as they thought proper. Thus the balance of the constitution would be destroyed, the executive power would become wholly dependent upon the legislative, and the genius of the government would be radically and essentially changed. The sovereign authority is not a property, but an office. To execute that office, certain powers are necessary; and whoever exercises it, and under whatever name he acts, ought to be possessed of those necessary powers; and no man under any title or denomination ought to be invested with more than are necessary. If hereditary monarchy be established as a salutary provision to frustrate the machinations of faction, the same rule applies to a regent, who ought to be invested with all the authority requisite to preserve the tranquillity and promote the welfare of the state." Mr. Fox not choosing to take the sense of the house, Mr. Pitt's motion for precedents was carried without a division.

A similar motion was the next day made by lord Camden in the house of peers, and the doctrine of Mr. Fox reprobated by his lordship with great severity. It was on the other hand defended with eloquence and ability by lord Loughborough, and lord Stormont, who concluded his speech with recommending an immediate address to the prince of Wales, entreating him to assume the exercise of the royal authority. The discussion of the abstract question of right being perceived to afford a great and unexpected advantage to the ministry, the duke of York, soon after this debate, in the name of the prince, expressed his wishes, "that the question might be waved. No claim of right, his highness said, had been advanced by the prince of Wales; and he was confident that his brother too well understood the sacred principles which seated the  
house

house of Brunswick upon the throne, ever to assume or exercise any power, be his claim what it might, that was not derived from the will of the people expressed by their representatives."

Lord Thurlow, who had at first consented to take a part in the new administration, in the arrangement of which the post of lord president had been assigned to him, now varying the course of his policy, spoke with great energy of his "sentiments of affection towards the king. Nothing could be more disgraceful than to desert the sovereign in his distressed and helpless situation. His own debt of gratitude was ample, and when he forgot his king might God forget him." These expressions were rumored to be the result of certain intimations, which his lordship had recently received of the happy and not very distant prospect of the king's recovery. This was however as yet a matter of anxious and precarious *speculation*.

In the committee on the state of the nation, December 16, Mr. Pitt moved two declaratory resolutions, importing, 1. The interruption of the royal authority; and 2. That it was the duty of the two houses of parliament to *provide the means* of supplying that defect. A vehement debate ensued; in the course of which Mr. Fox declared the principles of the minister to be, that the monarchy was indeed hereditary, but that the executive power ought to be elective. The legal metaphysics that thus distinguished between the crown and its functions were to him unintelligible. The investigators should be schoolmen, and not statesmen, if a question that so deeply involved the existence of the constitution were to be thus discussed. Where, said he, is that famous *dictum* to be found, by which the crown is guarded with such inviolable sanctity, while its *powers* are left to the mercy of every assailant? The resolution was at length carried, or a division, by 268 against 204 voices. This great point being gained, the  
ministry

ministry proceeded without hesitation or delay to convert it to their own pre-concerted purposes.

On the 23d of December, a third resolution passed, empowering the chancellor of Great Britain to affix the great seal to such bill of limitations as might be necessary to restrict the power of the future regent. This mode of procedure was opposed with great animation by lord North. "A person," said his lordship, "is to be set up without power or discretion; and this pageant, this fictitious being, is to give the force of a law to the decisions of the two houses. Was it ever before heard of, that there could be a power of giving assent without the power of refusing that assent? Would any man seriously maintain that the third estate thus conjured up is really distinct from the other two?" It was styled, in the heat and passion of debate, "an insulting fraud," a "mockery of legislation," a "legal forgery." And an amendment was finally moved by Mr. Dempster, "That the prince of Wales be requested to take upon himself the administration of the government during the royal incapacity." On the division the amendment was negatived by 251 to 178 voices.

The resolutions which had passed the commons being communicated for the concurrence of the lords, a similar amendment to that of Mr. Dempster was moved by lord Rawdon, when, after a violent debate, the resolutions were confirmed, on a division of 66 to 99 peers.

On the 2d of January 1789, to complete the singularity and perplexity of the business, died Mr. Cornwall, speaker of the house of commons; and on the 5th, the vacant chair was filled by Mr. Grenville, brother to lord Temple, —the irregularity of his entering upon the duties of his office without the sanction of the royal approbation being scarcely noticed, amid the pressure of affairs so much more important. The bill of Limitations, when ready to be introduced into the house, was obstructed by an unseasonable motion of Mr. Loveden, that the physicians be re-examin-

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ed on the subject of the king's illness, and the probability of recovery. This motion was the result of various reports respecting the disagreement of opinion amongst the physicians themselves,—reports sufficiently corroborated by the subsequent examination, which left the house as much in the dark as ever as to the event; answering no other purpose than to create an additional delay, of which the minister well knew the value and the advantage. A letter was at length written to the prince of Wales by Mr. Pitt; informing his royal highness of the plan meant to be pursued:—that the care of the king's person, and the disposition of the royal household, should be committed to the queen, who would by this means be vested with the patronage of four hundred places, amongst which were the great offices of lord Steward, lord Chamberlain, and master of the horse. That the power of the prince should not extend to the granting any office, reversion, or pension, for any other term than during the king's pleasure, nor to the conferring any peerage. The answer of the prince was firm, dignified, and temperate. He said, "it was with deep regret that he perceived in the propositions of administration a project for introducing weakness, disorder, and insecurity into every branch of political business;—for separating the court from the state, and depriving government of its natural and accustomed support; a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to him all the invidious duties of the kingly station, without the means of softening them to the public by any one act of grace, favor, or benignity. He observed, that the plea of public utility must be strong, manifest, and urgent, that could thus require the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential rights in the supreme power or its representative, or which could justify the prince in consenting, that in his person an experiment should be made to ascertain with how small a portion of kingly power  
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the executive government of his country could be conducted. In fine, the prince declared, that his conviction of the evils which might otherwise arise, outweighed in his mind every other consideration, and would determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by that melancholy necessity, which of all the king's subjects he deplored the most."

The bill intended to carry into effect this wild and dangerous project, the offspring of party interest and personal ambition, calculated only, as was justly and forcibly remarked, "to establish a weak government and a strong opposition," was brought into the house on the 16th of January 1789. Long and violent debates ensued, in the course of which a protest was entered on the journals of the house of lords, signed by the duke of York, at the head of the princes of the blood, and fifty-five other peers expressive of their highest indignation at the restrictions on the executive authority thus arbitrarily imposed. These extraordinary proceedings were at length, happily for the public, arrested in their progress, by an intimation from the lord chancellor, that the king was declared by his physicians to be in a state of convalescence. This was followed by a declaration on the 10th of March, that his majesty, being perfectly recovered from his indisposition, had ordered a commission to be issued for holding the parliament in the usual manner. The tidings of the king's recovery diffused the most general and heartfelt satisfaction. A national thanksgiving was appointed, and the king himself went in solemn procession to the cathedral of St. Paul's to offer up his grateful devotions on this event; which was celebrated throughout the kingdom by splendid illuminations, and all the other accustomed demonstrations of joy.

The conduct of the Irish parliament in this business formed a striking contrast to that of the English; and was dictated by a policy the most simple, obvious, and rational.



tional. On the ascertainment of the fact respecting the incapacity of the sovereign, Mr. Connolly moved, February 11, 1789, "That an address be presented to the prince of Wales, requesting him immediately to take upon himself the government of that kingdom as regent, during the continuance of the king's incapacity." This was carried WITHOUT A DIVISION. To this resolution the house of lords acceded. But the lord lieutenant, the marquis of Buckingham (late earl Temple), refusing, by a rash and hazardous exercise of discretion, to transmit this address to England, commissioners were appointed by both houses to present the address in person to his royal highness. The rapid and unexpected recovery of the king, happily superseded the object of their commission. But the prince in his reply declared, "that nothing could obliterate from his memory the sentiments of gratitude which he felt for their generous kindness."

Among the innumerable evils attending the mode of procedure adopted by the British parliament, one of the most formidable was the possible, and even probable, dissimilarity of the decisions of the two legislatures. Had the prince of Wales refused, under the degrading circumstances with which the offer of the regency was accompanied in England, to accept the government of the kingdom, there is good reason to believe that it would have been conferred upon the queen, while the prince would have been constituted regent of Ireland, with the usual powers of royalty. This would doubtless have given rise to a question of the most important, and at the same time of the most difficult nature, viz. Whether Ireland, agreeably to the political compact subsisting between the two countries, could constitutionally emancipate herself from the executive government established in England, under whatever name, or by whatever persons it might be exercised? Of this perplexing and dangerous question, the prudence of the prince in accepting of the regency under all the concomitant

comitant humiliating restrictions of parliament, fortunately precluded not only the investigation, but even the mention.

In the speech delivered by the chancellor in the name of the king to the two houses, his majesty conveyed to them his warmest acknowledgments for the additional proofs they had given of their attachment to his person, and their concern for the honor and interest of his crown. It soon appeared that the late proceedings of the ministry were in the highest degree acceptable to the sovereign: and those persons holding posts under the government, who had concurred in the measures of the opposition, were unceremoniously dismissed from their offices: amongst whom were the marquis of Lothian, the duke of Queensberry, lord Carteret, and lord Malmesbury.

Before the first auspicious moments of gratulation had subsided, Mr. Fox renewed his popular motion for the repeal of the shop tax, to which Mr. Pitt did not, in the present circumstances, choose any longer to refuse his assent; though he declared he had heard nothing in the way of argument, which induced him to change his original opinion. He accordingly moved an omission of that part of the preamble to the bill of repeal, by which the tax was pronounced a partial and oppressive imposition, militating against the just principles of taxation.

Mr. Dempster at the same time moved for a repeal of the hawkers and pedlars tax, which was originally imposed on the extraordinary ground of its operating as an indemnity to the shopkeeper; thus sacrificing one class of men to the convenience and accommodation of another. A total repeal of this law nevertheless could not be obtained; but a bill passed to explain and amend the act, by which the more onerous clauses were mitigated, and these friendless and injured people restored in some measure to their civil and commercial rights.

A motion

A motion of much greater importance was introduced soon after this (May 8), by Mr. Beaufoy, being a renewal of the application two years ago submitted to the house, for the repeal of the corporation and test acts; "prompted, as he said, thereto by the unalterable confidence which the dissenters reposed in the disposition of the house to do justice to the injured, and afford relief to the oppressed. And they could not forget how frequently the legislature had granted the requests, which causeless alarms had at first induced them to refuse."

This motion was supported by Mr. Fox with a force of argument which could not but make some degree of impression on the most callous and prejudiced mind. This great statesman laid it down as a primary axiom of policy, "that no human government had jurisdiction over opinions as such, and more particularly over religious opinions. It had no right to presume that it knew them, and much less to act upon that presumption. When opinions were productive of acts injurious to society, the law knew how and where to apply the remedy. If the reverse of this doctrine were adopted, if the actions of men were to be prejudged from their opinions, it would sow the seeds of everlasting jealousy and distrust; it would give the most unlimited scope to the malignant passions; it would incite each man to divine the opinions of his neighbor, to deduce mischievous consequences from them, and then to prove that he ought to incur disabilities, to be fettered with restrictions, to be harassed with penalties.

"From this intolerant principle had flowed every species of party zeal, every system of political persecution, every extravagance of religious hate. It was an irreverent and impious opinion to maintain, that the church must depend for support as an engine or ally of the state, and not on the evidence of its doctrines, and the excellency of their moral effects. Moderation and indulgence to other  
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sects were equally conducive to the happiness of mankind and the safety of the church.

“ Since the era of the revolution the church had flourished, because her imaginary fears had been dissipated. She had improved in knowledge and candor, because, instead of being enabled to impose silence on the dissenters by the strong hand of power, she had been obliged to hear their arguments; and the community at large had found the happy effects, which a collision of opinions in open and liberal discussion, among men living under the same government, never fails to produce. There were many men not of the establishment, to whose services their country had a claim. Surely a citizen of this description might be permitted without danger or absurdity to say, ‘ though I dissent from the church, I am a friend to the constitution; and on religious subjects I am entitled to think and act as I please.’ Ought the country to be deprived of the benefit she might derive from the talents of such men, and his majesty be prevented from dispensing the favours of the crown except to one description of his subjects? Mr. Fox declared himself a friend to an establishment of religion in every country, framed agreeably to the sentiments of the majority of its inhabitants. But to invest that establishment with a monopoly of civil and religious privileges, was palpably unjust, and remote from the purpose of an establishment, which was no otherwise connected with the state, than as it tended to promote morality and good order among the people. The test and corporation acts had subsisted, it was contended, for more than a century. True; but how had they subsisted? By repeated suspensions. For the indemnity bills were, literally speaking, annual acts. Where then would be the impropriety of suspending them for ever by an act of perpetual operation?—Let not Great Britain be the last to avail herself of the general improvement of the human understanding

understanding. Indulgence to other sects, a candid respect for their opinions, a desire to promote charity and good-will, were the best proofs that any religion could give of its divine origin. To the church of England in particular he would say,

*‘ Tuque prior, tu parce genus qui ducis Olympo.’*

Such are the noble and exalted sentiments which have long elevated Mr. Fox to the rank of the first statesman of his age and nation. The motion of Mr. Beaufoy was zealously opposed by lord North, in a speech consisting, as it was justly described by a member of the house in debate, of “a series of pompous nothings.”

Mr. Pitt also again appeared as its opponent, in an artificial harangue decorated with a great external shew of candor and speciousness of language. On a division the numbers, were ayes 104, noes 124; so that this important question—important indeed even beyond what the minister himself probably had at this period any conception of—was lost by 20 voices only. This therefore might be regarded as a decided victory on the part of the dissenters, had they known how to improve their advantage. But their resentment against the court and the minister was not at all abated by the soft and soothing expressions by which Mr. Pitt attempted to disguise and palliate his refusal: and the ground they had gained in despite of the courtly machinations against them, excited a degree of elation, which led to gross and fatal indiscretions.

About this time a bill of a nature very meritorious was introduced into the house of peers by lord Stanhope, for the repeal of a number of obsolete and vexatious laws, inflicting penalties upon persons absenting themselves from the service of the church, speaking in derogation of the book of common prayer, &c.

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On the second reading, Dr. Moore, archbishop of Canterbury, a prelate of a disposition naturally mild and generous, roused by this alarming attack upon the CHURCH, rose to give his decided opposition to the measure. "The bill under their lordships' discussion, if permitted to pass, would serve as a cover, his grace affirmed, to every species of irreligion. If unrestrained speaking, writing, and publishing on the subject of religion were tolerated, there was scarcely any mischief to the church or to civil society that imagination could frame, which might not be effected. The very foundation of religion, *as by law established*, might be undermined and overthrown."

Dr. Warren, bishop of Bangor, observed, "that it remained for these days of licentiousness to call in question the propriety and wisdom of those regulations which their lordships were now solicited to repeal. To compel men by penalties not to absent themselves from the public places of worship, did not militate against any sort of religious liberty, since the dissenters were allowed to resort to their own congregations: and he who could not communicate with either, might well be supposed to hold doctrines injurious to the state, and which ought not to be tolerated."

Dr. Halifax, of St. Asaph, enforced this assertion, and reminded the house of the institution among the Locrians, which obliged every man that proposed a repeal of an existing law, to come into the assembly with a rope about his neck."

Dr. Horsley, of St. David's, expressed himself in terms still more indignant, and with still greater ardor of holy zeal. He said "the bill in question was calculated to tear away the foundations of the church of England, and through her means to destroy the very being of the English constitution. The act of Elizabeth imposing a fine upon the non-attendance on divine worship, was a salutary law. It was a mistake to suppose the right of private judgment in religion unlimited. The magistrate had a right  
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to punish Atheism, as a crime against the welfare of society; and by the same rule, to punish a contempt for the revelation of God in the christian religion. There was moreover always danger in disturbing ancient laws, for the existence of which, at a distant period, no good reason could be given. Their wisdom, though not obvious at the period of the repeal, was generally proved by the mischief that ensued upon their annihilation."

Lord Stormont, enlightened and enraptured with these arguments, paid high compliments to the bench of bishops, declaring that they had that day done themselves infinite credit, and rendered their characters sacred in the public estimation. It is needless to say that the bill was rejected.

On the approach of the summer recess, Mr. Dundas, agreeably to the tenor of the India regulation bill, made his annual statement of the finances of the company, which he represented as in a most prosperous and flourishing condition; concluding however, as usual, with a motion to empower the company to raise the sum of one million, by way of increase of capital, to be subscribed by the present proprietors of East India stock; and the bill founded on this motion passed both houses with trivial opposition.

The session was far advanced, when Mr. Wilberforce brought forward his long expected motion, relating to the abolition of the African slave trade, which was now become the theme of public execration. Mr. Wilberforce divided his subject into three parts—the nature of the trade as it affected Africa itself; the appearance it assumed in the transportation of the slaves; and the considerations suggested by their actual state in the West Indies. What must be the natural consequence of a slave trade with Africa, with a country vast in its extent, not utterly barbarous, but civilized in a very small degree? Was it not plain that she must suffer from it? that her savage manners must be rendered still more ferocious, and that a slave trade carried on round her coasts, must extend violence  
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and desolation to her very centre? Such were precisely the circumstances proved by the evidence before the privy council. As to the mode in which the slaves were transported from Africa to the West Indies, he affirmed that so much misery condensed into so small a compass, was more than human imagination had ever before conceived. It was the constant practice to set sail in the night, that the slaves, wrung with distress at quitting for ever their native country, might not be sensible of the moment of departure. This dreadful event was marked with songs and tears of lamentation. It appeared in evidence, that a captain more susceptible than the rest had threatened a woman with the terrors of the lash, because her song was too painful for his feelings. The mortality on board the ships was prodigious; and including the subsequent *seasoning*, it did not amount to less than 50 per cent.

On their arrival in the West Indies, astringents and washes were employed to hide their wounds, and *make them up for sale*—artifices at once fraudulent and fatal. This infamous traffic was also known to be the grave of sailors employed in it. Of 3170 seamen who had sailed from Liverpool in 1787, only 1428 had returned.

Mr. Wilberforce said he felt the wickedness of the slave trade to be so enormous, so dreadful, and irremediable, that he could stop at no alternative short of its abolition. He acknowledged that his mind had indeed been harassed with the objections of the West India planters, who had asserted that the ruin of their property must be the consequence of this regulation. He could not, however, help distrusting their arguments. He could not believe that the Almighty Being, who forbade the practice of rapine and blood, had made rapine and bloodshed necessary to any part of his creation. Light soon broke in upon his mind. His suspicions were confirmed by daily information, and the evidence he had now to offer upon this point was decisive and complete. The principle upon which he founded  
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the necessity of the act, was not indeed policy but justice; but though justice were the principle of the measure, he would pledge himself to prove it reconcileable with our truest political interest.

Mr. Wilberforce concluded a long and excellent speech, equally addressed to the understanding and feelings of the house, and which produced a most sensible and powerful effect, by moving, not, as was generally expected, a general vote of censure and reprobation, which would have imposed an obligation on the house to have proceeded to strong and decisive measures; but an elaborate and tedious series of complex and somewhat dubious propositions, twelve in number, specifying the number of slaves imported from Africa, into the British West Indies; the different descriptions of persons included in this aggregate number; the injury sustained by the seamen employed in the African trade; the causes of the mortality of the negroes; and the different *items* of calculation respecting the increase of population in Jamaica and Barbadoes; and they concluded with declaring coldly, that no considerable or permanent inconvenience would result from discontinuing the farther importation.

Upon these propositions, Mr. Wilberforce said he did not mean to urge the house to come to any immediate vote. This afforded ample scope on the part of the anti-abolitionists, lord Penryn, lord Maitland, &c. &c. and they eagerly embraced the opportunity to create new difficulty and delay. Mr. Wilberforce declaring that he relied on the evidence contained in the report of the privy council, they insisted that the merchants and planters interested in this business were entitled to be heard by counsel.

Mr. Pitt observed with some degree of indignation, and as a very extraordinary circumstance, that the report had lain many weeks on the table, and no argument against its sufficiency had been heard of, till the moment was arrived that the house was expected to come to an ultimate vote on

the subject. At length, however, he conceded, with the too easy consent of Mr. Wilberforce, to the examination of witnesses on the part of the slave merchants and planters—vainly and credulously “trusting that unnecessary delays would not be introduced, as he could by no means submit to the ultimate procrastination of so important a business.” Lord Penryn in the course of the debate asserting, that, to his knowledge, the planters were willing to assent to any *regulation* of the trade, short of its abolition, Mr. Fox, with glowing eloquence, declared, “that he knew of no such thing as a regulation of robbery and restriction of murder. There was no medium: the legislature must either abolish the trade, or plead guilty to all the iniquity with which it was attended. This was a traffic which no government could authorize, without participation in the infamy.” Evidence being heard at the bar of the house for several successive weeks, it was at length, on the 23d of June, moved by Mr. alderman Newnham, “that the farther consideration of the subject be deferred to the next session.”

One of the most able and zealous associates of Mr. Wilberforce in this business, from the commencement of it, was Mr. William Smith, member for Sudbury, whose character in respect of honor, probity, and understanding, had perhaps no superior within or without the walls of that house. Upon this occasion Mr. Smith expressed his anxiety, “that the question should be brought to a speedy issue. He had not heard any good reason why the examination of witnesses might not be carried on for some weeks longer. It was known that the hearing of evidence was at all times thinly attended. If therefore the few members that did attend were willing to give up their time a little longer, why should other members complain of an inconvenience, in the suffering of which they took no share?” The question, however, was carried without a division,  
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and the temporary regulation act of sir William Dolben was renewed for another year.

It is worthy of transient remark, that Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Smith, and sir William Dolben, all of whom had conspicuously distinguished themselves in the progress of this business, were of religious persuasions very dissimilar—Mr. Wilberforce being a favorer of the doctrines of methodism, Mr. Smith an avowed dissenter, and sir William Dolben an high churchman. But on this great question, which involved in it the general interest of mankind, all subordinate differences vanished, and it sufficed to every valuable purpose, that they were all of the exalted and universal religion of HUMANITY\*.

The trial of Mr. Hastings was resumed early in the session, and the third article, respecting presents illegally and corruptly received by Mr. Hastings, brought forward by Mr. Burke. In his opening speech in support of this charge, in which the fatal business of Nund-comar stood most conspicuous, Mr. Burke made use of the following indiscreet expression: "that man Mr. Hastings ~~MURDERED~~ by the hands of sir Elijah Impey." This afforded a ground of petition from Mr. Hastings, that this

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allegation

\* In the beautiful poetic epistle, addressed to Mr. Wilberforce by the celebrated Mrs. Barbauld, on the subject of the slave trade, are to be found the following picturesque and animated lines, descriptive of the miseries entailed on the natives of Africa by this horrid traffic:

Nor in their palmy walks and spicy groves  
The form benign of rural pleasure roves;  
No milk-maid's song, or hum of village talk,  
Sooths the lone poet in his evening walk;  
No willing arm the flail unwearied plies,  
Where the mix'd sounds of cheerful labor rise;  
No blooming maids and frolic swains are seen  
To pay gay homage to their harvest queen.  
No heart expanding scenes their eyes must prove,  
Of thriving industry and faithful love:  
But shrieks and yells disturb the balmy air,  
Dumb sullen looks of woe announce despair,  
And angry eyes thro' dusky features glare.  
Friends of the friendless—Hail, ye generous band!  
Whose efforts yet arrest heaven's lifted hand;  
Around whose steady brows, in union bright,  
The civic wreath and christian's palm unite;  
Your merit stands—no greater and no less  
Without or with the varnish of success.

allegation should be prosecuted in specific articles, or that the house should grant him such redress as to them should seem meet."

After a long debate, the house of commons resolved, "that no authority had been given by the house for the purpose of making any criminal charge respecting the death of Nund-comar, and that the words complained of ought not to have been spoken." With this sort of reparation, though not absolutely amounting to an affirmation of innocence, Mr. Hastings was compelled to rest satisfied.

Mr. Grenville, speaker of the house of commons, being advanced, upon the resignation of lord Sydney, to the office of secretary of state, and in the sequel to a peerage, was succeeded, after sitting in the chair of the house scarcely six months, by Henry Addington, esq. The new speaker soon acquired great reputation for dignity, integrity and impartiality in the discharge of his office; and he is, by the united voice of contending factions, allowed to rank amongst the ablest of those who have occupied that high and difficult station.

In providing the supplies of the year, Mr. Pitt was obliged to acknowledge the necessity of borrowing the sum of one million, contrary to his own prediction, that no loan would be wanted. This necessity, however, did not arise from the unproductiveness of the taxes, which rose even higher than the previous estimate of the minister; but from extraordinary and unforeseen causes, the principal of which were the sums voted for the liquidation of the arrear of the civil list, and of the debt of the prince of Wales, and the expence of the late armament: so that the general prospect of future and permanent prosperity remained wholly unimpaired; and the minister acquired from the present state of commerce and of the public funds and revenues, great and just increase of reputation.

An important operation of finance took place in the course of the session, in the exchange of the heavy duties  
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on tobacco from the customs to the excise. This was effected with general approbation, and great advantage to the public. It is a circumstance well worthy of observation, as characteristic of the caprice and inconstancy of the public opinion, that this measure, which had nearly cost sir Robert Walpole his place, and even endangered his life—and against which 200 members of the house of commons divided on the original motion of the minister, and which he was finally compelled to relinquish—was now opposed on the third reading of the bill by 20 voices only, in a thin and deserted house of 90 members.

The session was terminated August 11, 1789, by a speech from the lord chancellor in the name of the sovereign; in which it was observed, “that although the good offices of the king and his allies had not been effectual for the restoration of the general tranquillity, the situation of affairs promised to this country the uninterrupted enjoyment of the blessings of peace.” This was an assurance highly and peculiarly grateful, in consequence of the recent events which had taken place in the different kingdoms of Europe. A war had been kindled, which gradually diffused itself from the Euxine to the Baltic—from the snow-clad mountains of Norway to the arid wastes of Tartary: and the foundations of a great and stupendous revolution had been laid, which, almost instantly expanding itself into gigantic growth, became the subject of terror, no less than of astonishment, to the surrounding nations.

Never was Europe more deceived than in the ideas she had originally formed of the character of the emperor Joseph II, upon whom, on his first entrance into the grand scenes of public life, all eyes were fixed, and under whose specious exterior the credulous enthusiasm of hope had discovered all the qualities of a legislator and a hero. And he was confidently announced as the monarch destined to throw the splendid reputation of Frederic the great into shade.

shade. Time however soon dispelled these false and flattering prepossessions; and he was perceived to be equally destitute of the talents and the virtues necessary to the formation of a great and illustrious character. Burning with an insatiable thirst for GLORY, that moloch of princes, at whose bloody shrine millions of human victims have been offered, his mind seemed eternally harassed and haunted with the enquiry, "What shall I do to be for ever known?"

While that justly celebrated statesman the prince de Kaunitz retained his influence over the councils of the court of Vienna, a veil was cast over the vices and defects of the sovereign. But as he advanced in life, and began to act upon his own ideas, and in reliance upon his own judgment, his vanity, his versatiliſity, his rapacity, his rashness, and his folly became apparent to all. Disappointed in his recent and favorite schemes of ambition, his evil genius now suggested another project still more absurd and impracticable than the former.

Since the famous treaty of Westphalia, by which the independency of Holland had been recognized by Spain, that haughty power, sensible of the erroneous policy which had lost so valuable a possession, adopted, with relation to the provinces which yet remained, a mild and lenient system of government. On the transfer of the low countries to the house of Austria by the treaty of Utrecht, the same equitable treatment was observed; and that no less under the weak and oppressive reign of Charles VI, than the auspicious and benign government of his daughter the celebrated Maria Theresa.

During all the vicissitudes of politics and of power, the Austrian Netherlands continued to flourish under the protection of their own just laws, and the limitations of their free and happy constitution. Of the provinces subject to Austria, by far the most considerable and extensive is Brabant; and although the forms of government established  
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in the different states bear a close analogy to each other, the constitution of Brabant is regarded as the best defined and most perfect. Like the constitution of England, it is compounded of three estates, and the executive authority is vested in the sovereign, who bears the title of duke of Brabant. The legislative power, including the important prerogative of levying taxes, resides in the states of Brabant, which is in part an elective and representative assembly, though not constructed on a very popular plan. The jurisdiction of civil and criminal causes is in the cities consigned to the magistrates, under various equitable restrictions. In the villages it nominally appertains to the lords of the manors or baronies; but it is in fact exercised by respectable persons, chosen for the most part by the inhabitants themselves, from whose decision an appeal lies to the baronial courts. The supreme tribunal of justice is established at Brussels, and it is distinguished by the appellation of the council of Brabant. Its functions are not however merely judicial. It is also a council of state, and participates largely in the executive power—for no act of the sovereign is valid till confirmed by the council under the great seal of Brabant. These and many other privileges were after long and fierce contentions guaranteed for ever to the people of Brabant, by a charter granted by one of the ancient dukes, and which, from the triumphal procession of the prince into his capital, on the original execution of it, is denominated the JOYEUSE ENTREE.

The acuteness of philosophical and political theorists would no doubt detect with ease the gross defects of this rude and artless sketch of a free constitution. But its general and essential excellence is sufficiently demonstrated by the prosperous state of the country, and the passionate attachment of the people to their established form of government. This free form of government Joseph the second had from deliberate malice, or, more candidly speaking, from excess of presumption and folly, determined to subvert

subvert and destroy. On the first of January 1787, two imperial edicts were issued, formally suppressing the anti-ent institutions, and even the great council of Brabant; establishing in their stead a new council of general government, assisted by tribunals crested on the severe and arbitrary model of those actually existing under the proper Austrian government. As if this were not enough to rouse the spirit of resistance in the nation, the emperor, careful to heighten the enthusiasm of civil liberty with the rage of religious bigotry, annihilated at the same time the charter of the university of Louvain, and established a new general seminary for the study of Theology—the professors to be nominated by the sole authority of the emperor. A violent and universal commotion instantly took place; and the states of Brabant, Flanders, and Hainault, assembling, forbade the people in express terms to pay any regard to the late edicts. All ranks of men enrolled themselves in military associations for their common defence. Deputies were dispatched to Vienna to represent their grievances, and to remonstrate with the emperor in person against these atrocious and unprecedented violations of their rights.

Agreeably to the irresolute and inconsistent policy of the emperor, the deputies, notwithstanding his previous menaces of vengeance, were most graciously received at the imperial court. The sovereign professed himself well-disposed to restore their ancient privileges as contained in the *Joyeuse Entrée*, and intimated an intention of visiting the Netherlands, to take measures with the states for the welfare of the people.

In a short time count Murray, the Austrian governor, published a proclamation, completely revoking the late proceedings, and re-establishing the anti-ent government. Happily for the people of Flanders, the capricious politics of the emperor had by this time directed their views to a distant and opposite quarter. The advantages acquired by

Russia



Russia in consequence of the treaty of 1784, excited the chagrin and envy of that monarch; and the Turkish empire at this period presenting an easy and inviting prospect of conquest, a negotiation was set on foot with this view between the two imperial courts; and in the spring of 1787, a conference took place between the Czarina and the emperor at the new capital of Cherson, whither the empress of the Russias had with great pomp and splendor repaired, in order to her inauguration as sovereign of the Taurica. Scarcely did she deign to affect concealment of her hostile intentions; and over one of the gates of the city she caused to be inscribed, "This is the gate which leads to BYZANTIUM."

The Ottoman porte, fully apprized of the machinations of the imperial courts, took a hasty resolution, notwithstanding her own extreme unpreparedness for commencing offensive operations, to publish an immediate declaration of war against Russia—in the hope probably of being able to conciliate the emperor before his plan of hostility was fully matured. This however was a vain expectation; the emperor ordering, after a very short interval, a memorial to be delivered by his ambassador at Constantinople, stating, "that he was compelled by treaty to assist his ally the Czarina with 80,000 men; and if this should be considered by the porte to an act of hostility, he was prepared for every event. Not waiting the answer, he made, on the 2d of December 1787, a most perfidious attempt to surprise the fortress of Belgrade. Being disappointed in this enterprise, he thought proper to offer an apology for his conduct, which only served by its futility to demonstrate the weakness of the government which condescended to accept it.

The imperial manifesto, containing a formal declaration of war, at length appeared, February 1788. Contrary to the ancient barbarous practice, the ambassadors of both the imperial courts were suffered to depart from Constantinople

tinople without molestation. The answer to the Austrian declaration, in a calm and dignified manner, reproaches the emperor with " wantonly violating a peace of fifty years continuance, without being able to allege a single injury or pretext. Numerous instances are adduced, in which, for the preservation of peace, the sublime porte had complied with unreasonable requisitions: and they justly observe, that they had never upon any occasion taken advantage of the embarrassments of the house of Austria, but had always acted with a liberality and good faith ill-requited in the present instance.

The operations of the Germans were in the commencement of the war far from successful. Little impression could be made upon the Turkish frontier; and no sooner had the grand vizier taken the command of the army, than the Turks became the assailants; and the emperor, who commanded in person, after suffering repeated losses, was compelled to a precipitate and disgraceful retreat, leaving the Banquet and the Lower Hungary to the mercy of the enemy. On the western side, however, where the famous marshal Laudohn commanded, the towns of Dubitza and Novi were reduced after a vigorous defence. On the eastern quarter, the city of Choczim surrendered, September 29th, to the united arms of Russia and Austria. And before the end of the year, the important fortress of Ocza-kow, after sustaining a siege of several months, was carried by storm; the Russians marching to the assault over the frozen snow, with which the trenches were filled.

A decisive superiority in the Black Sea was also obtained by the repeated victories gained on the part of the Russians by the prince of Nassau over the famous Turkish admiral Hassan Pacha.

In the mean time the king of Sweden, actuated by that spirit of unprincipled ambition, so usually the characteristic of princes as to be deemed scarcely the object of censure, and prompted likewise by the king of Prussia, and the powers

powers in alliance with the court of Berlin and inimical to Russia, entered suddenly, at the head of a considerable army, the territory of Russian Finland, whence the idea of passing by a direct and rapid march to Petersburg seemed not wholly chimerical. But a subject of bitter chagrin awaited him in the absolute and pertinacious refusal of his officers to engage in offensive war, on the patriotic ground; or perhaps the traitorous pretext, that the king had not, agreeably to the provisions of the constitution of 1772, obtained the previous consent of the states.

The court of St. Petersburg, on the first intimation of the attack from Sweden, had called for the aid and assistance of Denmark, conformably to the terms of the treaty of alliance subsisting between the two courts. Denmark had been for some years past under the administration of the prince royal, whose knowledge and prudence, far exceeding the immaturity of his age, were the happy result of a good natural understanding, improved to the utmost by an excellent and admirable education. The prince regent, on his accession to power, had restored the former ministers of the Danish court, displaced by Struensee, to their offices, amongst whom was the count de Bernstorff, whose wisdom and firmness have in the course of events been rendered very conspicuous. On the present occasion, the court of Copenhagen entered entirely into the views of the Czarina; and in the month of September 1788, a large body of Danish troops, commanded by prince Charles of Hesse Cassel, accompanied by the prince of Denmark in person, passing over to Norway, unexpectedly entered the Swedish province of Wernslandia, and advanced to the city of Gottenburgh with trivial opposition.

Alarmed at this formidable invasion, the king of Sweden repaired in person, with expedition almost incredible, to the defence of this important place; which being attacked thus unprepared, seemed very unable to resist the force of the Danes. But at this critical moment the courts

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of London and Berlin interposed their powerful mediation in favor of Sweden. Early in October, Mr. Hugh Elliott, envoy at Copenhagen, addressed himself first by letter and afterwards personally to the prince regent, requiring him, in the name of the allied courts, to consent to an immediate cessation of hostilities. "War, said the ambassador, is at this very moment declared with Denmark by Prussia and England. But if your highness will consent to what I propose, I will immediately dispatch couriers to stop if possible, the invasion of a Prussian army in Holstein, and the sailing of the British fleet."

Under these circumstances the resolution of the prince was soon taken, and a suspension of arms signed on the part of Denmark, October 9, 1788, which, after an interval of delay, was converted into a treaty of neutrality.

The beginning of the following year was signalized by the death of the grand signior Achmet IV. a prince apparently of beneficent and upright intentions, but whose talents were utterly inadequate to the mighty task of restoring the declining empire of the Ottomans to its pristine prosperity and greatness. He was succeeded by his nephew Selim III. son of the late emperor Mustapha, whose first act of authority consisted in the deposition of the grand vizier, Jussuf Pacha, who had conducted the operations of the last campaign with singular ability and personal success.

The emperor, sinking under the pressure of disease and disappointment, had retired to Vienna; and the renowned marshal Laudohn being appointed to the chief command, the operations of the war were renewed with consummate skill and wonderful increase of vigor. After the reduction of Gradisca, this veteran hero proceeded to form the siege of Belgrade; and on the 8th. of Oct. 1789, that important city, the bulwark of the Ottoman empire, surrendered on terms of honorable capitulation. The remainder of  
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the campaign presented a series of the most rapid successes. Gladova, Semendria, Czernitz, &c. followed the example of Belgrade. Orsova only attempted a serious resistance, and it was not reduced till after a long investment and blockade.

On the eastern side, the prince of Cobourg, general of the Austrian army in Walachia, after gaining a considerable advantage in an action fought near Foczan, attacked, in conjunction with the Russian general Suwarrow, with a very inferior force, September 22, 1789, the army of the new grand vizier, Hassan Pacha, a rash and ignorant commander at Martinefti, and gained a complete victory. This was attended with the immediate capture of Bucharest, the capital of Walachia, and the almost entire reduction of the country north of the Danube. In the mean time, Bielgorod on the Black Sea, and the city of Bender on the Tartarian frontier, surrendered to the arms of Russia, now conducted by prince Potemkin.

During this campaign the war in the north was carried on little to the advantage of Sweden: for although the king of Sweden had entirely re-established his authority, and taken a severe vengeance on the individuals who by their audacious and inflexible contumacy had arrested the progress of his arms, he could not so easily regain the advantages he had lost by that unexpected and unseasonable opposition. The immense power of Russia was now fully exerted. Sweden was reduced to act upon the defensive in Finland; and various naval encounters took place, in which the bravery and superior skill of the Swedes did by no means compensate for the Russian superiority of force.

In the ensuing campaign of 1790, the triumphs of the Russian arms over the Ottomans continued without any considerable interruption. The progress of these barbarous conquerors had been throughout marked with blood and desolation; but the capture under general Suwarrow,

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of the city of Ismail, taken by storm December the 22d, 1790, exceeded in horror every action of the present war, and may vie with that of any preceding one. The garrison, consisting of the flower of the Turkish army, was massacred in cold blood, and the inhabitants indiscriminately given up to the worse than brutal licentiousness of an enraged soldiery.

The military successes of the Austrians under the heroic Laudohn, served only to incite the faithless and perfidious Joseph to renew his attempts against his subjects of Flanders and Brabant. Count Murray, distinguished by his lenity of temper, was succeeded in the government by count Trautmansdorff; and the military placed under the command of general Dalton, an officer of approved skill, but of unrelenting and savage ferocity.

The new system commenced with the revival of the former attempt against the university of Louvain. This being resolutely resisted, the rector and professors were expelled by the point of the bayonet, August 1788, and many lives lost by the indiscriminate firing of the soldiery. Similar outrages and excesses taking place at Antwerp, Mechlin, &c. in consequence of the orders issued by the government; and military law, enforced by military execution, being in a manner proclaimed through the provinces, a prodigious emigration of the principal inhabitants immediately succeeded. The emigrants being favored and protected by the Dutch government, now under the influence of England and Prussia, assembled in numerous bodies on the frontier; at length, in the autumn of 1789, they entered Austrian Flanders in great force, and in a very short space of time overran the whole country, a few fortresses excepted, the Austrians flying before them with the most disgraceful precipitation.

The emperor now once more offered, in the most flattering and conciliatory language to restore to them their ancient constitution, and even to endow them with additional

tional privileges; but his overtures were rejected with scorn. The states of Brabant assembling at Brussels December the 22d, 1789, in concert with the deputies of the other provinces, formally disclaimed allegiance to the emperor, and proceeded to the appointment of an administration. General Vandermerfch, distinguished for his patriotism and bravery, was nominated to the command of the troops. M. Vander-noodt was declared prime minister, and M. Van-Eupen secretary of state.

In the month of January 1790, the plan of a federal constitution was formed by the BELGIC states—such was the appellation they now assumed, nearly similar to that of the united provinces. Unfortunately, however, it soon appeared that the leaders of the revolt, either little understanding or little regarding the essential rights of the people, had merely changed the imperial despotism to an aristocratical tyranny. The catholic religion was established in its most intolerant form, the power of arbitrary imprisonment was assumed, the liberty of the press disallowed, and the immunities of the privileged orders confirmed and even extended.

In the midst of these transactions, and while the insurgents were at the height of their successes, died, February 1790, the emperor Joseph. He was succeeded in his hereditary dominions by his brother Leopold, grand duke of Tuscany, and who now took upon him the style and title of king of Hungary. This prince, as the sovereign of a small state, had acquired the reputation of moderation, and even sagacity. But in proportion to the elevation of his situation his faults became more conspicuous, while his excellencies either wholly disappeared, or were henceforth very dimly seen.

Interesting as the transactions now related appeared in the view of Europe, they nevertheless yielded both in importance and singularity to the events which were at the same time taking place in the kingdom of France.

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The appointment of the archbishop of Toulouse as successor to M. de Calonne, proved the source of equal disappointment to the court and to the nation. On his elevation to the post of minister, his patriotism seemed to vanish; and, by losing the confidence of the people, he deprived himself of the power of being serviceable to the monarch. The project of the court to obtain the sanction of the assembly of notables to the measures in contemplation had proved wholly abortive; recourse must now again therefore be had to the parliament of Paris; and on the 12th of June 1787, an edict was sent to that body for enregistry, imposing a heavy duty on stamps. Instead of a loyal and dutiful compliance, the parliament demanded the communication of such documents as should enable them to judge of the necessity of introducing new taxes. That this was a just claim, they said, the very expression of *verifying* the royal edicts implied.

The refusal of this demand produced a refusal on their part to enregister the edict; and after violent debates, and repeated efforts of the patriotic party in parliament, it was at length voted that a national assembly would be necessary previous to the imposition of a new tax, and a resolution at the same time passed to supplicate the sovereign to assemble the STATES GENERAL of the kingdom.

In the remonstrance presented on this occasion by parliament to the throne, the stamp duty is pronounced more dangerous than even the exploded *gabelle*; and they remark, "that after five years of peace, after an augmentation of the revenue during the present reign of five millions sterling, it was scarcely to have been expected that the name of TAX should have been pronounced by a beneficent sovereign, but for the purpose of alleviating the burdens of the people."

The answer of the king was peremptory and haughty. Far from conceding to the wishes and prayers of the parliament,



liament, he rose still higher in his demands. Reserving to a future day the declaration of his intentions respecting the stamp tax, he transmitted to them a new edict of far greater importance, for commuting the existing *vingtièmes* into a regular and equal land-tax, "which from the zeal and loyalty of his parliament, his majesty was pleased to say, he expected them immediately to register."

The parliament, assuming more intrepidity as the danger became more imminent, summoned the peers of France on the following day, as was usual in great emergencies, to assist in their deliberations; and it was voted in full assembly, that the parliament persisted in their resolution, and renewed their supplication to the sovereign to assemble the states general of the kingdom.

Before the second address could be presented, a royal message was delivered, announcing the intention of the king to hold a bed of justice. The parliament, immediately re-assembling, came to several resolutions expressive of their determined resistance. The bed of justice was nevertheless held: and in defiance of the resolutions read by the first president M. D'Aligre, the edicts were forcibly re-registered. These proceedings, contemptuously described as "the empty form of collecting by the keeper of the seals the opinions of the assembly, where no one could give a vote," were at the subsequent meeting of parliament declared null and void, and expunged from their records.

This resolute opposition of the parliament produced a wonderful effect on the already highly agitated state of the public mind. Such were the apprehensions entertained by the government of the general spirit which pervaded the mass of the people, that great numbers of the military were assembled at Paris, and the members of the courts of justice were obliged to pass to their sittings through armed ranks of soldiers with bayonets fixed.

The government of France plainly appeared at this moment to be a government resting merely on the precarious basis of military force, without possessing, as a collateral security, a single particle of the esteem, confidence, or affection, of the nation. On the 15th of August, 1787, *lettres de cachet* were issued against the parliament of Paris, transferring their sittings to Troyes, in Champagne, one hundred miles from the capital. Previous to their exile they passed an animated resolve, "that the French monarchy would be reduced to a state of despotism, if ministers, abusing the authority of the king, might dispose of men's persons by *lettres de cachet*, of their property by beds of justice, of causes civil and criminal by annullings and evocations, and suspend the course of justice by particular exiles or arbitrary translations.

All France seemed to interest itself in the disgrace of the parliament. The flame of opposition and disaffection increased every moment. Almost all the public bodies in the kingdom joined in petitioning the throne, not in an humble and submissive, but in a bold and peremptory tone, for the recall of that assembly, and the convocation of the states general. The parliament of Grenoble declared "the rights of property to be equally sacred, and secured by the same laws, as the right of the king to the throne;" and the parliament of Besançon, in reprobating the emission of the *lettres de cachet*, scrupled not to affirm "that the Parisian magistrates ought to have yielded no sort of obedience to them."

In this situation the new minister, wavering, hesitating, and trembling for his safety, advised the monarch, in his answer to the address of the court of aids, September 2, to signify his intention for the present to suspend the execution of the obnoxious edicts; and on the 19th of that month letters of revocation were issued, and the parliament was permitted to resume its functions. The first measure of the executive government subsequent to this event,

event, a measure highly consonant to the predominant spirit of liberty in the nation, was the promulgation of an edict for the toleration of the non-catholics, nearly similar to the famous edict of Nantz, repealed in the last century. This popular law was registered by the parliament without difficulty; but with respect to the financial projects of the government they continued as refractory as ever. The plan now proposed by the minister was that of a series of loans, amounting in the aggregate to about eighteen millions sterling, for five successive years, at the end of which term he engaged the honor of the sovereign that the states general should be convoked. This offer was treated with contempt. To promise a convocation of the states general when the deficiency of the finances should be filled up, was said to amount to a promise to call them together when they would no longer be wanted. The embarrassments of the minister hourly accumulated. The expedient of a bed of justice had been tried with very ill success. It was now, therefore, resolved to hold a *séance royale*, in which the measure should be debated in the king's presence, previous to the enregistry, as a milder and more equitable mode of proceeding. Upon this occasion M. Lamoignon, keeper of the seals, by the command of his majesty, stated to the parliament, in an eloquent and *instructive* oration, the established and unalterable principles of the French monarchy. "To the king alone belonged the sovereign power, and to God only was he accountable for its exercise. To the king belonged the power of convoking the states; he alone could judge of their utility and necessity, and he was the sole arbiter of the grievances and complaints of his subjects. He ventured to assert, that the wish now generally entertained of calling together the states general had ORIGINATED with the king, whose zeal for the public good perpetually outran the desires of his people. He therefore rebuked the parliament for the disrespectful importunity with

which they had solicited this measure; and he declared the establishment of provincial assemblies, on the plan devised by the late minister, to be fraught with more solid advantages to the community at large."

The sitting continued seven hours. The debates of the parliament, notwithstanding the presence of the sovereign, were conducted not only with freedom, but with violence and asperity. It was affirmed by one member, l'Abbé Sabatier, "that the only difference between a bed of justice and a *séance royale* was, that one had all the frankness of despotism, and the other all its hypocrisy." And M. Freteau, speaking of the recent accommodation between England and France on the subject of Holland, said, "it was a proceeding at which Louis XIV. would have blushed." At length the king rose and declared, "that having heard the sentiments of the assembly, he persisted in his opinion; he therefore directed the edict of the successive loans to be immediately registered." On this the duke of Orleans, first prince of the blood, who aspired to the distinction of head of the popular party, declared to the king, "that he regarded this measure as illegal." The king having retired in anger, the duke formally recorded his dissent, and the parliament passed a resolution abjuring every sort of concern in the enregistry that had then taken place. On the following day the duke of Orleans and Messrs. Sabatier and Freteau were sent into exile—the former to his chateau in the country, the two latter to imprisonment in distant parts of the kingdom; and by express command of the king, the resolution of parliament was erased from their records.

The famous remonstrance of the parliament on these violent proceedings, presented to the king March 1788, after several previous ineffectual ones, was fraught with the most glowing and energetic sentiments of liberty. They declare, "that the laws of nature and of the constitution shall never reproach them for preserving, in such  
a crisis

a crisis, a shameful inactivity, or a guilty silence—liberty is declared by them to be an imprescriptible right, and justice an universal duty, anterior to the laws, and equally obligatory on the monarch and subject. The practice of *lettres de cachet* overturns this system—justice thereby becomes a mere illusion, and liberty an empty name. Where no personal security exists, public safety is but an imaginary bliss; and where the practice of *lettres de cachet* subsists, personal security cannot exist. Could your majesty but interrogate those victims of arbitrary power abandoned and forgotten in those impenetrable dungeons where silence and injustice ever dwell, you would then know to what torments is condemned the wretch for whom the sun rises without hope, and the night returns without repose. We have authority to believe that the duke of Orleans and Messrs. Sabatier and Preteau are not guilty; were they so, the right of judging them is reserved for the parliament, and the prerogative of pardoning to your majesty. Liberty is not a privilege, but a right; and it is the duty of all governments to respect that right. It is not a prince of the blood, nor two magistrates, that the parliament claims now in the name of the laws and of reason; it is three French individuals—**THREE MEN.**” To this remonstrance the king, with true monarchical apathy and pride, answered, “that his parliament must with due respect and silence confide in his wisdom, and that he forbade them to have or publish any farther deliberations on the subject.”

A project more rash and chimerical than any hitherto entertained by the minister, was now disclosed. This was no less than the establishment of a supreme court by the name of the *COUR PLENIERE*, consisting of members to be nominated by the king, and to be vested with the power of enregistering the royal edicts—thus superseding the existing parliaments in the highest and most appropriate branch of their authority. The parliament of Paris, apprised

apprised of the fatal stroke that was meditating, published, May 7, a declaration, copies of which were transmitted to all the other parliaments, expressive of their determined resolution to oppose to the utmost this arbitrary and unconstitutional innovation. "The system of complying with the king's absolute will, say this assembly, as expressed in his different answers, proves the minister's destructive project of annihilating the principles of the national government, which parliament is bound to maintain, and from which it will never depart."

The court, resolving to prosecute their nefarious designs, issued orders for the arresting Messrs. D'Espremenil and Monsambert, two celebrated counsellors and patriotic members of the parliament; and a party of the military surrounding at midnight the seat of justice, demanded the immediate surrender of the two magistrates. A most animated remonstrance from the parliament was the result of this act of tyranny—happy had the sentiments it contained produced their just effect on the mind of the monarch! "your parliament is confirmed, SIRE; say they, by every proceeding, of the entire innovation which is aimed at in the system of monarchy; but, SIRE, the French nation will never adopt the despotic measures to which you are advised: the fundamental laws of the kingdom MUST not be TRAMPLED on, and your authority can only be esteemed so long as it is tempered with justice. We beseech your majesty not to suffer apparent or momentary advantages to divert your attention, as they may only produce unhappy consequences. Your majesty will sooner or later discover the justice of our representations."

A bed of justice being in defiance of the warnings and threatenings of parliament held, and the edict for the establishment of the COUR PLENIERE forcibly enregistered, the most violent commotions ensued throughout the kingdom, which every where wore the appearance of  
hostility

hostility and war. The first president of the parliament, in the name of that assembly, informed the king that the parliament would acknowledge no authority which infringed on the complete exercise of their prerogatives. The parliament of Rouen pronounced the edicts in question to be null and void, and all persons assisting in the execution of them to be traitors to the nation; and for this daring act of patriotism *lettres de cachet* were immediately executed against them. The parliaments of Rennes, of Grenoble, and of Metz, distinguished by their zeal in the same cause, were in like manner ordered into banishment. Great bodies of the military were in motion; and every step taken on the part of the court indicated a resolution to persevere in the plan of coercion, when, on the sudden, the courage of the king and his ministers once more totally failed them; and an order of council was published, August 8, fixing the convocation of the states to the first of May 1789, and SUSPENDING during the interval the institution of the COUR PLENIERE.

On the 16th of August a second arret of council was promulgated, avowing the inability of the court to answer the ordinary demands upon the royal treasury; and directing the future payments to be made partly in money, and partly in notes bearing an interest of five per cent. This was regarded as a direct act of bankruptcy; and the clamor, confusion and consternation which ensued were so great, that the archbishop of Toulouse, no longer able to resist the torrent, thought proper to resign his office after an administration of little more than a year, distinguished by its inconsistency, imbecility, and temerity. To console him in his disgrace, he was translated to the rich archiepiscopal see of Sens, and decorated with the Roman purple.

The voice of France called aloud for the re-instatement of M. Necker, who was now a second time placed at the head of the finances. The reputation of the new minister

fièr operated as a sort of charm. By the adoption of wise measures adapted to the present exigencies, the immediate embarrassments of government were removed. All eyes were now turned to the approaching convocation of the states general, previous to which a second convention of the notables was held (October 5, 1788) in order to determine several important questions that had arisen relative to the formation of the assembly of the states. It appeared to be nearly the unanimous opinion of the notables, that it should be constructed on the model of the last assembly convened in 1614; and a doubt was even suggested, whether any power short of that of the states general deliberating in the antient manner by the established orders of nobles, clergy, and the *tiers état*, could superinduce upon it any material alteration. The notables were dissolved on the 12th of December 1788.

The final decision of the court was at length made known by a decree of council, dated 27th of December: by which it was determined, that the number of deputies to the ensuing states general should not fall short of one thousand; that it should be apportioned with all practicable accuracy to the population and financial contributions of the different bailliages: and that the representation of the *tiers état* should be equal to the sum of the representations of the other two orders—a concession eagerly desired by the nation, and attended with the most important consequences.

At length, on the 5th. of May 1789, a day ever memorable in the annals of France, and of the world, the assembly of the states general met at Versailles, and the session was opened by a speech from the king, couched in terms of patriotic and paternal regard, such as princes well know upon occasion how to adopt. Although the excessive repugnance of the court to the adoption of this measure had been most notorious, his majesty congratulated the assembly on the arrival of the day which he had  
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so long *penté* to see. "The public spirit," said the monarch, "is in a ferment, but an assembly of the representatives of the nation will certainly hearken to no other counsels than those founded on justice and wisdom. Whatever may be expected from the most tender solicitude for the public good, whatever can be asked from a sovereign the sincerest friend of his people, you may, you ought to hope from me." At this period, no doubt, the court was ready to submit to the necessity, which it could not but recognize, of making great and permanent concessions for the satisfaction of the nation, and the restoration of the public tranquillity. But to ascribe to the monarch the most distant idea of a voluntary departure from the ancient and established prerogatives of sovereignty, would be the extreme of weakness and credulity.

The first object of the states was the "verification of their powers." This ceremony the *tiers état* insisted, to the astonishment of the superior orders, could only take place in a common assembly, voting not by orders, but by poll. The admission of this pretension involved in it no less than the absolute subversion of the ancient constitution of the states; and it was resisted in the strongest manner by the superior orders, as a flagrant usurpation. On the other hand, the *tiers état* plainly perceived that the ancient mode of voting by orders would reduce them, the real representatives of the people, to whom it peculiarly appertained to establish freedom in France, to mere ciphers.

After six weeks of inaction, the *tiers état*, at the suggestion of the abbé Syeyes (June 17), took the daring and decisive step of declaring itself the legislative body, by the appellation of the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, and proceeded to the verification of their powers.

On the 19th of June, the chamber of the clergy passed a resolution, importing their acquiescence in this decision. Alarmed in the highest degree at the situation of affairs, the monarch held on the 23d a royal session, in which he

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proposed a plan of government, liable indeed to many objections, but containing the great outlines of a free constitution. Agreeably to this plan, the distinction of orders was preserved, allowing them nevertheless to debate in common on emergent occasions, with the royal approbation. In fine, the king declared, in virtue of his royal authority, the proceedings of the 17th null and void—and ordered the deputies immediately to separate: This was the decisive moment. An unreserved obedience to the order of the king would have rendered them contemptible in their own eyes, and in those of the nation, which had received with unbounded acclamation the resolution reprobated by the monarch. The question to be determined was, whether they would be satisfied to accept from the royal benignity the imperfect and precarious boon now offered? or whether, at the imminent risque of their lives and fortunes, they would make one grand effort to establish a constitution founded on the eternal and immutable principles of equal and perfect freedom? Impelled by a glorious and resolute enthusiasm, they hesitated not for a moment which of these alternatives to embrace. When the king retired, he was followed by all the nobles and a part of the clergy: the commons alone remained motionless on the benches. The marquis de Brezé, grand master of the ceremonies, addressing himself to the president, M. Bailli, said, “sir, you know the orders of the king:”—to which the president with Roman dignity replied, “the people of France in their collective capacity have no orders to receive.” And M. Mirabeau, a member highly distinguished in the sequel by his talents and eloquence in the assembly, starting up, added, “go tell your master, that we are here by the power of the people, and that nothing shall expel us but the bayonet.”

On their next meeting, the assembly were joined by the majority of the clergy, and forty-nine members of the nobility, with the duke of Orleans at their head; and on  
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the 27th, at the express instance of the king, agreeably to his characteristic inconstancy, by the remaining members of the superior orders; though the duke of Luxemburgh predicted, as it is said, to the monarch, "that from the day the states should vote by numbers only, from that moment he was at their mercy."

The assent of the king was however false and hollow. An army of 35,000 men, collected from various parts, were stationed under the command of marshal Bröglio in the vicinity of Versailles and Paris. Camps were marked out for a still greater force, and lines of fortification drawn. A most spirited remonstrance was presented to the king by the assembly, requesting, or rather insisting upon the removal of the troops. This was peremptorily refused; but his majesty declared his willingness to indulge the assembly by a removal of their sittings to Soissons, a situation far more commodious for the purposes of the court.

On the 11th of July M. Necker was suddenly dismissed, and ordered to depart the kingdom in twenty-four hours; and with him his friend M. Montmorin, minister for foreign affairs. In the disgrace of M. Necker the assembly saw their own ruin determined: and they passed a resolve, that the late ministers carried with them the confidence and regret of the nation. But the popular enthusiasm having now reached its height, a most astonishing insurrection took place at Paris on the 14th of July, in which the castle of the bastille was carried by storm; the soldiery refusing to obey the orders of their officers, and many joining the assailants.

The monarch, astonished and intimidated at these proceedings, once more varied his policy; and, appearing in person the next day in the national assembly, declared "he had issued orders for the immediate removal of the troops." A burst of joy and acclamation succeeded; and it was now at last hoped, that the monarch, sensible of the evil counsels by which he had been deceived and misled, would

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not henceforth deviate from the path of political rectitude. M. Necker and count Montmorin were immediately reinstated in their offices. The count d'Artois, marshal Broglio, the prince of Condé, and other leaders of the court faction, were compelled to seek for safety in flight: and on the 17th of July the king made his triumphal entry into Paris.

The assembly now proceeded without interruption in their labors; and in a short time several very important decrees, containing the first principles of the new constitution, importing the subordination of the executive, the supremacy of the legislative, and the independency of the judicial powers, were presented for the royal acceptance. After a delay of many weeks, and an urgent reapplication, the royal assent was most reluctantly given, with an express salvo for the antient essential and constitutional prerogatives of the crown. All the former jealousies were now revived; and it was universally rumored and believed, that preparations were in train to facilitate the retreat of the king to Metz in Lorraine, where the royal standard was to be raised in hostile opposition to the national assembly. Inflamed and enraged with this dreadful apprehension, another popular insurrection, of a nature not less extraordinary than the former, took place, October the 6th, in which a nocturnal attack was made on the palace of Versailles, the king and the queen, by whose fatal counsels the monarch had been chiefly guided, made captives, and conducted to Paris, where the palace of the Tuilleries, secured by a strong military guard, was assigned them for their future residence. The effect of this violence on the person of the sovereign was an explicit and unconditional acceptance on his part of the articles of the constitution, formerly presented; and the national assembly removed their sittings to Paris, where they were henceforth deeply occupied in executing the Herculean task of regenerating the  
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the whole system of the national polity, laws and government.

Amongst the decrees which most excited the admiration or astonishment of the world were those which pronounced the annihilation of all feudal privileges, the abolition of all distinction of orders, the resumption of tithes and other ecclesiastical and monastic property; the dissolution of monastic institutions; the allotment of the kingdom into a new territorial division, under the name of departments, eighty-three in number, nearly equal in population and extent; finally, the extinction of the provincial parliaments, and the establishment of departmental assemblies, of courts of justice, and the trial by jury in each department. The general principles on which the government of the kingdom was modelled, were comprehended in a declaration of rights, drawn up with great precision and ability; and which may serve as a perpetual charter of liberty to mankind\*.

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\* This famous DECLARATION, which well deserves a place in the frontispiece of every national code of laws, is substantially as follows:

I. Men were born, and always continue, free and equal with respect to their rights. Civil distinctions therefore can be founded only on public utility.

II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. And these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.

III. The nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty.

IV. Political liberty consists in the power of doing whatever does not injure another.

V. The law ought only to prohibit actions hurtful to society.

VI. The law is an expression of the will of the community. All being equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all honors, places and employments, without any other distinction than that created by their talents and virtues.

VII. No man should be accused, arrested, or held in confinement, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed.

VIII. No one ought to be punished but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence.

IX. Every man is to be presumed innocent till conviction of guilt.

X. No man ought to be molested on account of his opinions, not even his religious opinions; provided his avowal of them does not disturb the public order.

XI. Every man may speak, write, and publish freely—being responsible for the abuses of this liberty in cases determined by law.

XII. A public force is necessary only to give security to the rights of men and citizens.

XIII. Public

It is no wonder that a revolution so extraordinary, and which, notwithstanding certain unhappy concomitant irregularities and excesses, afforded so fair a prospect of future and permanent happiness, should excite great exultation amongst the friends of liberty in England. The first public demonstration of this appeared on the occasion of an anniversary meeting of a whig association in the metropolis, known by the name of the revolution society, on the 5th of November, to celebrate the memory of that great monarch, by whose heroic interposition, at a crisis of imminent danger, the laws and liberties of Great Britain were, under the favoring auspices of heaven, settled on a solid and permanent basis. Previous to the assembling of the members at the usual place of festive meeting, a sermon or discourse on "the love of our country" was preached to such as chose to hear, at a chapel belonging to the dissenters at the Old Jury, by the famous Dr. Price; in which the primary principles of government were stated in a mode which the sanction of a century had rendered familiar in this country; and the great doctrines of liberty inculcated with all that emphasis and energy which characterized the pen of that distinguished and venerable patriot. "The improvement of the world depended," as the preacher affirmed, "on the attention given by men to this topic. Nor will mankind be ever as virtuous and happy as they are capable of being, till the attention to it becomes universal and efficacious. If we forget it, we shall be in danger of an idolatry as gross and stupid as that of the ancient heathens,

XIII. Public contributions ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their several abilities.

XIV. Every citizen has a right, by himself or his representative, to a free voice in determining the necessity and appropriation of public contributions.

XV. Every community has a right to demand of its agents an account of their conduct.

XVI. Every community, in which the separation of powers is not determined, nor a security of rights provided for, wants a constitution.

XVII. The right to property being inviolable and sacred, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in cases of evident public necessity legally ascertained, and upon condition of a previous and just indemnity.

heathens, who, after fabricating blocks of wood or stone, fell down and worshipped them." At the conclusion of this discourse, in expatiating on the favorableness of the present time to all exertions in the cause of liberty, he broke out into the following eloquent exclamation—"What an eventful period is this! I am thankful that I have lived to it: and I could almost say, LORD! *now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* I have lived to see a diffusion of knowledge which has undermined superstition and error; I have lived to see the rights of men better understood than ever, and nations panting for liberty which seemed to have lost the idea of it. I have lived to see thirty millions of people indignantly and resolutely spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice; their king led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects.—After sharing in the benefits of one revolution, I have been spared to be a witness to two other revolutions, both glorious; and now methinks I see the ardor for liberty catching and spreading, and a general amendment beginning in human affairs—the dominion of kings changed for the dominion of laws, and the dominion of priests giving way to the dominion of reason and conscience. Be encouraged, all ye friends of freedom, and writers in its defence! The times are auspicious. Your labors have not been in vain. Behold kingdoms admonished by you, starting from sleep, breaking their fetters, and claiming justice from their oppressors! Behold the light you have struck out, after setting America free, reflected to France, and there kindled into a blaze, that lays despotism in ashes, and warms and illuminates EUROPE!"

Impressed with these noble and elevated sentiments, the society, whose numbers on this occasion far exceeded those of any former anniversary, unanimously resolved, on the motion of Dr. Price, to offer in a formal address "their congratulations to the national assembly, on the event of the late glorious revolution in France." This being transmitted

mitted by the chairman, lord Stanhope, to the duke de la Rochefoucault, and laid by that distinguished nobleman before the assembly, was received with loud acclamations. "It belonged," said the duke de la Rochefoucault in his reply, "to Dr. Price, the apostle of liberty, to propose a motion tending to pay to liberty the fairest homage—that of national prejudices." In that address is seen the dawn of a glorious day, in which two adverse nations shall contract an intimate union, founded on the similarity of their opinions, and their common enthusiasm for liberty." Also the archbishop of Aix, president of the national assembly, transmitted to lord Stanhope, in a manner the most polite and flattering, the vote of the assembly, relative to the address, stating, "that the assembly was deeply affected with this extraordinary proof of esteem, and directing the president to express to the revolution society, the lively sensibility with which the national assembly had received an address, breathing those sentiments of humanity and universal benevolence, that ought to unite together in all countries of the world the true friends of liberty, and the happiness of mankind."

Such was the general state of things, when the parliament of Great Britain was convened at Westminster, January the 21st, 1790. The king's speech contained nothing remarkable. It slightly and ambiguously glanced on the affairs of France, in declaring "the internal situation of the different parts of Europe to have been productive of events which had engaged his majesty's most serious attention." But early indications appeared of the light in which the recent transactions in that kingdom were viewed by the court. Lord Valletort, in moving the address, took occasion to contrast the tranquil and prosperous situation of England with the anarchy and licentiousness of France, and to stigmatize the revolution in that kingdom as an event the most disastrous, and productive of consequences the most fatal which had ever taken place since the founda-  
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tion of the monarchy. This language was highly applauded by the old prerogative phalanx, distinguished by the appellation of the king's friends. But these sentiments unfortunately were far from being confined to that inveterate and dangerous faction.

Upon the debate which took place on February the 9th, relative to the army estimates, Mr. Burke argued in favor of a reduction of the peace establishment, from that state of perfect security which the nation at present enjoyed—professing that, on a review of all Europe, he “ did not find that politically we stood in the smallest degree of danger from any one state or kingdom it contained, nor that any foreign powers, but our own allies, were likely to obtain a preponderance in the scale. “ France, said Mr. Burke, “ has hitherto been our first object in all considerations concerning the balance of power. But France is in a political light to be considered as **EXPUNGED** out of the **SYSTEM** of **EUROPE**. Whether she could **EVER** appear in it again, as a leading power, was not easy to determine: but at present he considered France as not politically existing; and **MOST ASSUREDLY** it would take **MUCH TIME** to restore her to her former **ACTIVE EXISTENCE**. *Gallus quoque in bellis floruisse audivimus*, might possibly be the language of the rising generation. It was said, as she had speedily fallen, she might speedily rise again. He doubted this. The fall from an height was with an accelerated velocity; but to lift a weight up to that height again was difficult, and opposed by the laws of physical and political gravitation. In a political view, France was low indeed; she had lost every thing, even to her name.

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Jacet ingens littorè truncus,  
Avolsuq; humeris caput, et sine nomine corpus.

He was astonished at it. He was alarmed at it. He trembled at the uncertainty of all human greatness. The French had shewn themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto appeared in the world. In one short

summer they had completely pulled down to the ground their monarchy, their church, their nobility, their law, their army, and their revenue. Were we absolute conquerors, and France to lie prostrate at our feet, we should blush to impose upon them terms so destructive to all their consequences as a nation, as the duration they had imposed upon themselves. In the last age we were in danger of being entangled by the example of France, in the net of a relentless despotism—a despotism indeed proudly arrayed in manners, gallantry, splendor, magnificence, and even covered over with the imposing robes of science and literature. Our present danger, from the example of a people whose character knows no medium, is, with regard to government, a danger from licentious violence—a danger of being led from admiration to imitation of the excesses of an unprincipled, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy—of a people whose government is anarchy, and whose religion is atheism. Mr. Burke pronounced the French nation very unwise. What they valued themselves upon was, in his opinion, a disgrace to them. They had gloried, and some people in England had thought fit to take share in that glory, in making a revolution. All the horrors and all the crimes of the anarchy which led to this revolution, which attend its progress, and which may eventually result from its establishment, pass for nothing. The French have made their way through the destruction of their country to a bad constitution, when they were absolutely in possession of a good one. Instead of redressing grievances, and improving the fabric of their state, to which they were called by their monarch, and sent by their country, they had rashly destroyed all the balances and counterpoises which serve to fix the state, and to give it a steady direction. These they had melted down into one incongruous ill-connected mass; and, with the most atrocious perfidy and violation of all faith among men, laid the axe to the root of all property,

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and consequently of all national prosperity, by the principles they established, and the example they set in confiscating all the possessions of the church. They had made and recorded a sort of institute and digest of anarchy, called "A declaration of the rights of man:" thus systematically destroying every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. By this *mad declaration* they had subverted the state, and brought on such calamities as no country, without a long war, had ever been known to suffer. Mr. Burke declared that he felt some concern that this strange thing called a revolution in France should be compared with the glorious event commonly called the revolution in England. In truth, the circumstances of our revolution, as it is called, and that of France, are just the reverse of each other in almost every particular, and in the whole spirit of the transaction. What we did, was in truth and substance not a revolution made, but prevented. We took solid securities; we settled doubtful questions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable fundamental parts of our constitution we made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the monarchy. The nation kept the same ranks, the same subordinations, the same franchises, the same order in the law, the revenue, and the magistracy; the same lords, the same commons, the same corporations, the same electors. The church was not impaired. Her estates, her majesty, her splendor, her orders and gradations continued the same. She was preserved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of that intolerance which was her weakness and disgrace. Was little done then because a revolution was not made in the constitution? No—every thing was done; because we commenced with reparation, not with ruin. Instead of lying in a sort of epileptic trance, exposed to the pity or derision of the world for her wild, ridiculous, convulsive movements, the state flourished; Great Britain rose above the standard of her

former self. All the energies of the country were awakened, and a new æra of prosperity commenced, which still continues, not only unimpaired, but receiving growth and improvement under the wasting hand of time."

Mr. Fox, notwithstanding his personal regard and friendship for Mr. Burke, thought it necessary, in justice to the rectitude and dignity of his own character, to declare "his total dissent from opinions so hostile to the general principles of liberty; and which he was grieved to hear from the lips of a man whom he loved and revered—by whose precepts he had been taught, by whose example he had been animated to engage in their defence. He vindicated the conduct of the French army in refusing to act against their fellow-citizens, from the aspersions of Mr. Burke, who had charged them with abetting an abominable sedition by mutiny and desertion—declaring that, if he could view a standing military force with less constitutional jealousy than before, it was owing to the noble spirit manifested by the French army; who, on becoming soldiers, had proved that they did not forfeit their character as citizens, and would not act as the mere instruments of a despot. The scenes of bloodshed and cruelty that had been acted in France, no man, said Mr. Fox, could hear of without lamenting. But when the grievous tyranny that the people had so long groaned under was considered, the excesses they had committed in their efforts to shake off the yoke could not excite our astonishment so much as our regret. And as to the contrast which Mr. Burke had exhibited, respecting the mode in which the two revolutions in England and France were conducted, it must be remembered, that the situation of the two kingdoms was totally different. In France, a free constitution was to be created. In England, it wanted only to be secured. If the fabric of government in England suffered less alteration, it was because it required less alteration. If a general destruction of the antient constitution had taken place

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in France, it was because the whole system was radically hostile to liberty, and that every part of it breathed the direful spirit of despotism."

Mr. Sheridan, with still less reserve and attention to personal respect, reprobated the political sentiments which had been that night advanced by Mr. Burke. "The people of France," said Mr. Sheridan, "it is true, have committed acts of barbarity and bloodshed which have justly excited indignation and abhorrence. That detestation and abhorrence however are still more justly due to the government of France prior to the revolution; the tyranny and oppression of which had deprived the people of the rights of men and of citizens, and driven them to that degree of desperation which could alone have incited those unexampled acts of cruelty and revenge which had been practised in the first agitation and violence of the effort to regain their freedom. Could it be expected, that men in their situation should be capable of acting with the same moderation and the same attention to humanity and sensibility as characterised freemen? Were the mad outrages of a mob an adequate ground for branding the national assembly with the stigma of being a bloody, ferocious, and tyrannical democracy? It was a libel on that illustrious body thus to describe them. A better constitution than that which actually existed, it is allowed that France had a right to expect. From whom were they to receive it? From the bounty of the monarch at the head of his courtiers? or from the patriotism of marshal Broglie at the head of the army? From the faint and feeble cries emitted from the dark dungeons of the bastille? or from the influence and energy of that spirit which had laid the bastille in ashes? The people, unhappily misguided as they doubtless were in particular instances, had however acted rightly in their great object. They had placed the supreme authority of the community in those hands by whom alone it could be justly exercised, and had reduced their sovereign to the rank which properly

perly belonged to kings—that of administrator of the laws established by the free consent of the community.” The house appeared during a long and most interesting discussion, greatly agitated by this shock and conflict of opinions. But Mr. Pitt preserved a cautious and politic silence as to the merits of the revolution which had taken place; lavishly applauding, nevertheless, Mr. Burke for the zealous and seasonable attachment he had displayed to the principles of the British constitution.

The spirit by which the court was now actuated still more evidently appeared in their conduct relative to the dissenters, who had signalized themselves by the exuberance of their joy at the late events in France. Since the favorable decision of the late session relative to the repeal of the test laws, they had not ceased their efforts by every means in their power to increase the number of their friends in the house of commons. Provincial meetings were convened by them in every part of the kingdom; and resolutions, framed in terms for the most part harsh and revolting, passed, expressive of their sentiments of the injustice and oppression under which they suffered. And in contemplation of the approaching general election, they had even the gross indiscretion, in many of their public votes, to recommend a marked preference in favor of those who had shewn themselves the friends and advocates of equal and universal liberty. In the stead of Mr. Beaufoy, a friend and partisan of the minister, Mr. Fox was now solicited to move the house a third time for the repeal of the Acts in question; to which he gave a ready and generous assent. By appearing to consider the repeal of the test laws as a matter of great magnitude and importance, the nation at large, which had originally regarded the question with indifference, were led to believe it to be a matter of high and serious import. Counter-meetings of the friends of the church were called, in which the repeal of the test

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was deprecated as fatal to its security. The clergy revived with incredible success the obsolete and senseless clamor, that the CHURCH was in DANGER. All possible encouragement was given to these artifices of faction and efforts of bigotry by the court; so that when the period arrived at which the destined motion was to be made, the dissenters were astonished to find the government, the church, and the nation combined in passionate opposition to a claim which to them appeared founded on the clearest principles of reason, policy, and justice.

On the 2d of March Mr. Fox brought forward his motion of repeal, which, unmindful of its present extreme unpopularity, and fixing his attention only on the essential and immutable rectitude of the measure, he supported with a wonderful display of ability. He said, that it was to him a matter of triumph, that the very people who had imputed to him designs hostile to liberty and subversive of the constitution, had requested him to plead their cause on that day. This was at once a refutation and reparation of the WRONG they had done him. He said, he was himself a member of the established church, and thought an establishment, if not necessary, at least useful and advisable. And should any attempts be made to invade the just rights of the church, she should find him as ready to stand forward the champion of those rights, as he was this day to plead those of the dissenters; and he hoped the time would come, when the church would see his conduct in its true light, and acquit him of any design upon her splendor, influence, or greatness. Persecution, said Mr. Fox, is a bond of union. Remove the barriers which separate the dissenters from the community of citizens, and in their collective capacity they would be no longer known. Men unite to resist oppression: but cease to oppress, and the union is dissolved. Continue it, and you render the union still more compact and firm, till resistance, at first perhaps weak, gradually becomes formidable, and finally successful.

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And experience shews, that when oppression has been carried to certain lengths, men think that the only way to destroy the oppression is to destroy the oppressor. Such is the tendency and such the termination of this wretched system of policy. For any government to extend its jurisdiction over the opinions of individuals, said this magnanimous statesman, is at once absurd and tyrannical. It is absurd, for opinions must and ought to be free. They are not the proper objects of human authority, and they may in fact be perfectly innocent and harmless, when in a mere speculative view they perhaps appear fraught with mischief and danger. It is tyrannical, for it would furnish a pretext for every species of oppression and persecution. It is not to control opinions, but actions, that government is instituted. And then only has the state a right to interfere, when by any overt act a man has offended against any known law. Then, and then only, is punishment justly inflicted, when a man by his conduct has proved himself criminal; and not when it is inferred, and perhaps most unjustly inferred, from his opinions, that he may possibly become so. Such, said Mr. Fox, is the absurdity of the laws in question, that the legislature has for many successive years regularly passed an act for indemnifying those who presume to serve their country at their own peril. To this miserable expedient are men driven, rather than repeal a law which they themselves blush to execute."

Mr. Pitt, who had done himself honor by the temper and moderation with which he had opposed the former applications, now indulged some expressions of asperity. "Neither the merits nor demerits of individuals ought, he said, to have any influence in the discussion of the present question: yet was the conduct of the dissenters liable to just reprehension, who, at the very moment they were reprobating the test laws, discovered an intention of forming associations through the country for the purpose of imposing a test upon the members of that house, and judging of



of their fitness for discharging their parliamentary duty from their votes upon this single question. He was far from wishing to throw any stigma upon the dissenters; but he affirmed it to be **EXTREMELY PROBABLE**, that they might exercise the power they demanded for the subversion of the present establishment. The important question at issue, he asserted, plainly was, whether the house ought to relinquish at once those acts which had been adopted by the wisdom of our ancestors to serve as a bulwark to the church, whose constitution was so intimately connected with that of the state, that the safety of the one must be always affected by any danger that threatened the other. To toleration the dissenters were undoubtedly entitled. They had a right to enjoy their liberty and their property, to entertain their own speculative opinions, and to educate their offspring in such religious sentiments as themselves approved. But the indispensable necessity of a permanent church establishment for the good of the state, required that toleration should not be extended to equality; if it were, there would be an end for ever to the wise policy of prevention, and a door would be opened to the absolute ruin of the constitution."

Mr. Burke seconded the minister in a speech of far more virulence, and in present circumstances therefore of far more efficacy. He expressed his "utter contempt of all abstract principles of natural right; these, he said, were annihilated by society, which secured the possession of every comfort which those proud and boastful rights impotently held out, but could not bestow. He astonished and alarmed the house with reading several passages from the writings of dissenting divines on the subject of ecclesiastical establishments, expressed with the usual acrimony and violence of theological polemics. From these testimonies Mr. Burke inferred the inveterate enmity of the dissenters to the church; and he adjured the house to suffer the fatal incidents which had taken place in France, and the sudden

sudden ruin of the Gallican church, to awaken their zeal for the preservation of our present happy and excellent establishment." On the division the numbers were, ayes 105, noes 294; so that the majority against the repeal had increased since the last session from 20 to 189 voices.

In consequence of the unhappy manner in which this question was treated, the spirit of religious bigotry, prejudice, and animosity was revived throughout the kingdom in an extraordinary degree. The grand fabric of policy which it had been the labor of a century to rear, and the glory of the house of Hanover for two successive reigns to cherish, was now in a moment of rashness and resentment demolished and overthrown. The dissenters on their part can by no means be acquitted of blame. Considering the great plausibility which may be given by eloquent and artful men to principles the most absurd and erroneous, it is no wonder that many highly respectable persons, far removed from contempt as to knowledge and understanding, should regard the repeal of the test laws as attended with a degree of risque and danger†. Till the PASSIONS of the public were awakened, it is however extremely evident that the arguments of the dissenters, and of their advocates, both in and out of parliament, made a sensible impression in their favor; but when they proceeded to a rude and arrogant mode of urging their claim, the voice of reason was lost in the subsequent conflict. Had the dissenters conducted themselves with the respect and deference due to the government of a country even when in error, it is by no means improbable that at a future period the court might

† "The sufferings of men in their civil rights upon religious accounts," says bishop HODLEY in his memorable answer to bishop SHERLOCK, "was the INFLAMING CONSIDERATION—and what gave rise to those passions which in the last century produced such fatal effects. The contrary conduct, therefore, would have the contrary effect. Let all hardships and all oppressions cease. Let there be no civil punishment; or civil suffering, or civil inconvenience, call it as you please, on account of what is the dictate of men's private conscience, unless it immediately affects the civil government. If the former method has been tried, and has been seen to blow up disaffection into violence, then the true cure for these evils is to prevent

might have *suffered* the repeal to pass ; but by pressing the repeal with a boldness and precipitancy which allowed no salvo for the honor of government, they could expect no other than a decided and acrimonious opposition. It is nevertheless very remarkable in one view, that the measure in question should be opposed with such pertinacity by the executive government, since the very object of the repeal was merely to remove a restraint upon the exercise of its prerogative. And if the object of these successive applications had been attained in its utmost extent, it would still have depended upon the pleasure of the crown, whether a single dissenter should have been employed in any office for which a compliance with the test was previously necessary. The conduct of the dissenters, too eagerly solicitous to remove a stigma which they were conscious they did not deserve, must indeed be acknowledged unwise and indefensible. But when, was wisdom supposed the characteristic of a promiscuous and countless multitude ? The conduct of government was also at least equally unwise. But from the government of a great nation we have a right to expect wisdom ; and from the palpable want of it during the present reign, evils and mischiefs beyond all power of calculation have resulted. After the fatal experience of  
thirty

prevent them by acting a contrary part, and trying that which never yet has had in any part of the world so fatal effects. To go on in the old way of continuing grievances and burdens, is only to pave the way to the same evils whenever time and opportunity shall offer ; and this as certainly as that the same human nature will be worked upon in the same manner by the same methods : or as certainly as that the same causes, all things concurring, will ever produce the same effects. Those evils were begun by partiality and oppression, and therefore the true lasting effectual remedy would be for government to abolish all partiality as to civil rights, and all hardship wherever there is equal affection to the civil government, properly so called. Admitting, for argument sake, the disaffection of the dissenters to the government at former periods, if that disaffection to the civil constitution, testified by former actions, were a just ground for making such exclusive acts, then certainly the truest affection to the present civil constitution, testified through a long series of years, and in times the most critical and dangerous, is the justest reason in the world for putting an end to these acts." Such were the noble sentiments, and such the generous and enlightened policy with which the dissenters were not only uniformly treated, but publicly defended, by those men in whom the house of Brunswick once placed their trust and confidence.

thirty years, that most important of all political truths remained to be discovered—that mankind are with infinitely more ease and efficacy to be governed by mildness than severity.

Shortly after the decision of the house upon this business, Mr. Flood, so long celebrated as a patriot and orator in the Irish house of commons, and who had sat some years almost undistinguished in the British parliament, brought forward a plan of parliamentary reform, in conformity to which an additional number of representatives, to the amount of one hundred, was to be admitted into the legislative body, in a proportional ratio to the population of each county, by the election of the resident householders only. This was a bold and happy effort at reform; and it was supported by the mover in a very able and eloquent speech, in which, adverting to the present state of things in France, he declared “that it was the want of timely and temperate reforms that had made a revolution necessary in that country. Those who opposed such reforms might be enemies to revolution in their hearts, but they were friends to it by their folly.”

This motion was vehemently opposed by Mr. Windham, member for Norwich, the obsequious and devoted admirer of Mr. Burke, who adopted in their full extent all his eccentricities and deviations from the rule of right, but who followed him in his superior lines of character, his genius, and his eloquence, with very unequal steps. “At the close of the American war, Mr. Windham said, a deluge of opinions had been let loose, a clamor had been raised, and a parliamentary reform demanded—as a remedy for the evils we felt from it. Happily those wild notions had long since subsided; the danger, however, was now breaking out afresh; and were he otherwise a friend to the proposition, he should have objected to it on account of the time at which it was introduced. Where was the  
man

man who would be mad enough to advise them to repair their house in the hurricane season?"

Mr. Pitt entirely coincided in these reasonings of Mr. Windham, and declared, "that were the motion before them the precise proposition he himself had formerly offered, he should now vote against it from a conviction of its actual impropriety. But at a more seasonable opportunity he would MOST CERTAINLY again submit his ideas upon the subject to the consideration of the house."

Mr. Fox declared, "that he saw no reason why we should be struck with a panic on account of the situation of affairs in France; and in allusion to Mr. Windham's metaphorical argument, he affirmed, that no season could be more proper to begin a repair than when a hurricane was near and ready to burst forth." Mr. Flood perceiving the general sentiments of the house, even of those members who had formerly favored the idea of parliamentary reform, to be adverse to the motion, at length assented to withdraw his proposition.

The business relative to the abolition of the slave trade went on slowly and heavily. Every artifice of procrastination was used on the part of the slave-merchants and planters, and the whole session passed over in the hearing of evidence, and examination of witnesses.

The trial of Mr. Hastings also proceeded with most equal languor. On the 16th of February (1790) the charge respecting presents was recapitulated by Mr. Burke; but in the entire course of the session the court sat only thirteen days. The enthusiasm of those who wished and expected to have seen a great public delinquent brought to speedy and exemplary justice, was fast changing to compassion for the man who seemed destined to live a life of impeachment, and to have become the object of a relentless prosecution. The evidence on three articles only of the general charge out of twenty was as yet closed on the part of the commons, after which Mr. Hastings was to enter upon

upon his defence, and the commons were to reply; so that in all probability the judges and the witnesses, the accusers and the accused, would be all swept away by the hand of time before the trial could arrive at its legal termination. The common sense of mankind revolted at this procedure. It appeared manifest to all, that this was not the mode in which human affairs could or ought to be conducted. The real merits of the cause were lost in the immensity of the detail. It was not to be expected or imagined that the public at large could pretend to form any judgment respecting it. This only without hesitation they inferred, that if Mr. Hastings was so criminal as he was represented, a short and simple statement of facts would suffice to prove his guilt. But Westminster hall was converted into a LYCEUM, a school of eloquence, and all was seen confused and magnified through the mist of rhetorical declamation.

The house of commons had indeed originally proposed, that the lords should decide separately upon each article, which might doubtless have tended considerably to shorten the proceedings; but this their lordships refused, as an unfair and partial mode of determining upon the merits of so complicated a case, and in which many of the articles of impeachment were so intimately connected. Towards the close of the session, a resolution passed the house of commons, on the motion of Mr. Burke, "That the house do authorize the managers to insist only upon such and so many of the charges as may appear to them conducive to the obtaining speedy and effectual justice;" and major Scott was, by the order of the house, reprimanded by the speaker in his place, for ascribing, in a certain libellous publication, the procrastination of the trial to the systematical artifices of the manager.

On the 31st of March, 1790, Mr. Dundas brought forward his annual statement of the debts and revenues of the East India company, as required by the regulation act. He represented, according to annual custom, their situation

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on as in the highest degree prosperous and flourishing; and what is very remarkable, he did not conclude his eulogium of the present year, with asking a loan to enable them to avoid the horrors of insolvency. Through the wise and equitable administration of lord Cornwallis, the revenues of Bengal had been advanced during the last year, without the aid of any new imposition, from one million eight hundred thousand pounds to two millions one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. The present governor general, on his accession to his high office, had stated the situation of the provinces as most wretched and deplorable. In his dispatch to the court of directors, dated August 2, 1789, he says, "independent of all other considerations, it will be of the utmost importance for promoting the solid interest of the company, that the PRINCIPAL LANDHOLDERS and TRADERS in the interior parts of the country should be *restored* to such circumstances as to enable them to support their families with decency, according to the customs of their several *castes* and religions. I am sorry to be obliged to say, that agriculture and internal commerce have for many years been gradually declining; and that at present, excepting the class of shroffs and banians, who reside most entirely in great towns, the inhabitants of these provinces were advancing hastily to a general state of poverty and wretchedness. In this description I must include almost every zemindar in the company's territories." And in his council-minute of September 18, 1789, his lordship writes, "I can safely assert, that ONE THIRD of the company's territory is now a jungle, inhabited by WILD BEASTS!"

One of the primary and most important measures of the new governor general was, to lease the lands *in perpetuity* at an equitable valuation to the actual occupants; in allusion to which momentous transaction his lordship thus forcibly expresses himself to the directors: "the security of property, and the certainty which each individual will

now feel of being allowed to enjoy the fruits of his labors, must operate uniformly as incitements to labor and industry." This could not but be construed as a bitter satire on the conduct of his predecessor; and as amounting to a very explicit acknowledgment of the misery and oppression which the inhabitants had long suffered under his capricious, haughty, and tyrannical domination.

In the month of April Mr. Pitt presented, as usual, his statement of the national revenue and expenditure; and it was very consolatory to the public to be informed that the receipt of the exchequer had surpassed that of the year preceding in the sum of half a million, and more so to be told that still greater accessions might reasonably be hoped from the uninterrupted enjoyment of the inestimable blessings of peace. It therefore excited peculiar astonishment, when in about a fortnight from this period, viz. May 5th, 1790, a royal message was delivered by the minister, announcing a state of things which bore the undisguised and menacing aspect of war.

To elucidate this matter, it is necessary to mention that the celebrated circumnavigator Cook, in his last voyage of discovery, touching at divers ports on the western coast of North America, purchased from the natives a number of valuable furs bearing a high price in the Chinese market. This branch of commerce, proving very lucrative, a spot of ground was in the year 1788 procured from the indians, and a regular establishment, defended by a slight fortification, formed at a place called Nootka Sound, situated about the 50th degree of latitude.

This being regarded by the Spaniards as a flagrant encroachment on their exclusive rights of sovereignty, the Princessa, a Spanish man of war dispatched for this purpose by the viceroy of Mexico, in the following spring, seized without ceremony upon the fort, and captured such

English



English vessels, the *Iphigenia*, *Argonaut*, &c. as were found trading on the coast. At the same time the Spanish commandant, hoisting the national standard, declared that the whole line of coast from Cape Horn to the 60th degree of latitude belonged to the king of Spain. After some delay, and much loss and vexation to the proprietors, the captured vessels were restored by order of the viceroy, on the supposition, as he declared, "that nothing but ignorance of the rights of Spain could have induced the merchants in question to attempt an establishment on that coast."

Of these particulars the court of London was informed by the Spanish ambassador so long since as the 10th of February; and his excellency at the same time requested "that measures might be taken for preventing his Britannic majesty's subjects from frequenting those coasts, and from carrying on their fisheries in the seas contiguous to the Spanish continent, as derogatory to the incontestible rights of the crown of Spain." This was the exact counterpart of the memorable affair of Falkland Islands, which had so nearly involved Europe in a war twenty years before. The minister of that day, had he continued in power, would doubtless have avoided striking a second time upon the same rock; but it has been observed, not without too much color of plausibility, from facts like the present, that although individuals gain wisdom by experience, nations do not.

The claims of Spain, in relation to her rights of dominion and sovereignty in America, were doubtless in the highest degree chimerical, and could perhaps be equalled in extravagance only by the claims of Great Britain. By the treaty of 1763 the river Mississippi, flowing from north to south in a direct course of 1500 miles, was made the perpetual boundary of the two empires; and the whole country to the west of that vast river belonged to his catholic majesty, by just as valid a tenure as the country

eastward of the river to the king of England. Exclusive of this recent and decisive line of demarcation, by which the relative and political rights of both nations were clearly ascertained, the Spanish court referred to ancient treaties, by which the rights of the crown of Spain were acknowledged in their full extent by Great Britain.

Charles III. king of Spain died December 1788, and his son Charles IV. the present sovereign, confiding in the justice of his claims, offered with dignified candor to submit the decision of this question to any one of the kings of Europe, leaving the choice wholly to his Britannic majesty. "It is sufficient (says the Spanish minister, count Florida Blanca) for the Spanish monarch, that a crowned head, from full information of the facts, shall decide as he thinks just; adding, that on a late application to the court of St. Petersburg, in relation to similar encroachments on the part of the Russians, the empress had given the most positive orders that no settlement should be formed on that line of coast. As to the non occupancy of the particular spot in question by the Spaniards, the court of Madrid justly observed, that such a plea, if admitted, would tend, by the incongruous intermixture of settlements, to the utter annihilation of all definite and permanent boundaries."

The reply of the court of London to the memorial of the Spanish ambassador was high and haughty. "The act of violence mentioned in the memorial, necessarily suspended any discussion till an adequate atonement had been made for a proceeding so injurious to Great Britain."

On the statement of these facts in the royal message, the house unanimously joined in an address to the king, assuring his majesty of the determination of his faithful commons to afford his majesty the most zealous and affectionate support, in such measures as may become requisite for maintaining the dignity of his majesty's crown, and the essential interests of his dominions." A vote of credit

credit passed the house for the sum of one million; and vigorous military and naval preparations were made in both kingdoms, in the contemplation of an immediate declaration of war.

It must be acknowledged that the hostile procedure of Spain had reduced the English ministry to a difficult dilemma. The value of the settlement at Nootka, in a commercial and national view, was beneath all calculation of insignificance; and it argued culpable inattention in the British ministers, not to have been better and earlier apprised of the extent of the real or imaginary rights of Spain, whose jealousy at the slightest infringement upon those rights was sufficiently notorious. This extreme irritability was the more pardonable, as Spain had ever with the strictest honor abstained from all violations of the similar claims and pretensions of other countries. A moment's reflection must have evinced, that a British settlement on the coast of California must be eventually productive of a serious contention with the court of Madrid: and a slight degree of discretion would have sufficed to obviate this ground of national quarrel. But in consequence of the rash step taken by Spain, the NATIONAL HONOR was now at stake: and Mr. Grey, in moving for papers relative to this transaction, justly observed, "that national honor was not, as some represented it, a visionary thing; a nation without honor was a nation without power. In losing this inestimable attribute, it inevitably lost the genuine spring of its spirit, energy and action. Every nation therefore ought to be careful of its honor; to be careful lest by one mean submission it encouraged an attack upon the dignity of its character—that best security for the preservation of its peace."

These high and elevated sentiments, suggested by the generous ardor of youth, Mr. Burke's long and eventful experience seemed to regard as susceptible nevertheless of some modification. "He hoped that the national honor

would not be found incompatible with the means of amicable accommodation. As we never ought to go to war for a profitable wrong, so we ought never go to war for an unprofitable right. He therefore trusted that the intended armament would be considered not as a measure calculated to terminate the war happily, but to carry on the negotiation vigorously. He wished the war might be avoided. He had seen three wars, and we were gainers by none of them. Our ability and resources were doubtless great; but *then* did a country prove its magnanimity most clearly, when she manifested her moderation to be proportionate to her power. What indeed had we to contend for? If all the distant territories of Spain were thrown into the scale of England, we should, like Spain, be only the weaker for our acquisitions."

On the 10th of June, 1790, the king terminated the session, and in his speech signified the probability of a speedy dissolution of the present parliament; assuring them in handsome terms of "the deep and grateful sense which he entertained of that affectionate and unshaken loyalty, that uniform and zealous regard for the true principles of the constitution, that unremitted attention to the public happiness and prosperity, which had invariably directed all their proceedings;" and on the day following the parliament was dissolved by proclamation.

Conscious of her inability to contend alone with the power of England, Spain had in an early stage of the negotiation applied to the court of France, to know how far she could depend, in present circumstances, upon the fulfilment of the conditions of the family compact in case of a rupture with Great Britain.

From the period of the king's compulsive removal to Paris, no symptoms of opposition to the will of the nation had appeared; and by seeming cheerfully to acquiesce in the successive decrees of the assembly, he had in some measure recovered what of all things is most difficult to  
regain

regain—LOST CONFIDENCE. “Let us,” said the monarch, in a speech delivered on a solemn occasion to the assembly (February 1790), “give ourselves up with good faith to the hopes that we ought to conceive. Continue your labors. Let it be known that your monarch applauds them. I should have many losses to recount, but I find my happiness in that of the nation. From the bottom of my heart do I express this sentiment. I will maintain the constitution with my whole power. May this day, in which your monarch comes to reunite himself to you, effect in like manner the re-union of all !”

In the plan of the new constitution, though much was detracted from the prerogative of the monarch, much was retained : and the authority of the king of France was still amply sufficient for the real purposes of government. He was acknowledged as the sole depositary of the executive power—as the supreme head of the general administration of the kingdom. In virtue of his sanction, the acts of the legislative body acquired the force of law. He was constituted not the nominal merely, but efficient chief of the army and of the navy. The external safety of the state, and the conservation of its rights and privileges in relation to foreign powers, were confided to him. He disposed at his pleasure of the great offices of state. He appointed, recalled, and received ambassadors, and he was the grand medium of intercourse with foreign nations. He was addressed by the august titles of SIRE and MAJESTY; and to maintain the dignity and splendor of the crown, he had a civil list revenue of one million two hundred and fifty thousand pounds per annum. Where then, after all the senseless clamors of the enemies of this revolution, was as yet the mighty injury the monarch had sustained ? That the constitution itself, like all other human things, was not free from imperfection, may without difficulty be admitted ; but the subsequent misfortunes of France originated from causes which bore no analogy

to those defects. They were owing not to the constitution, whether well or ill constructed, but to the opposition made to its establishment.

The count de Montmorin having laid, by order of the king, the memorial of the Spanish court before the assembly, this gave rise to a very interesting report from the diplomatic committee, presented to the assembly by the count de Mirabeau. With some hesitation, and many high compliments to the English nation, the report comes at length to the conclusion, "that it would not be just or honorable to annul the solemn engagements subsisting between Spain and France at an instant when Spain is threatened with the same dangers which she had repeatedly warded off from them." An ardent wish for the establishment of permanent peace and cordial amity with England is notwithstanding the predominant sentiment in this celebrated report. "Perhaps, say they, the moment is approaching when LIBERTY, triumphant in both hemispheres, shall accomplish the wish of philosophy, by delivering the human species from the necessity of war. What is it but an insidious system of politics that has hitherto represented as our rival a nation whose steps we have followed, whose brilliant example has been a light to direct us in the attainment of our liberties, and with whom so many new motives lead us to cultivate a good understanding?"

Notwithstanding the vote of the national assembly for an immediate augmentation of the naval force, the court of Madrid plainly saw the reluctance of the French nation to engage in a war with England: and, yielding to necessity, complied first with the harsh demand of previous restitution and indemnification; and at length, on the 2d of October (1790) a convention was signed at the escorial, by which every point in dispute was conceded by Spain. The settlement at Nootka was restored; the free navigation and right of fishery in the southern Pacific were confirmed

firmed to Britain; a full liberty of trade was granted to all the north west coasts of America, beyond the most northerly of the Spanish settlements, unaccompanied, however, by any formal renunciation of their right of sovereignty. And the two powers were, on the other hand, equally restrained from attempting any settlement nearer to Cape Horn than the most southerly of the settlements actually formed by Spain. A very wise article was inserted likewise in this treaty: that in all future cases of complaint, or supposed infraction of the present convention, no act of violence shall be committed, but an exact report shall be made of the affair to the respective courts, who will terminate such difference amicably.

Thus ended a dispute frivolous in its origin, but which seemed in its progress to threaten very serious consequences, and which cost Great Britain the sum of three millions in warlike preparations; though this expence might have been, with great advantage to the general interests of mankind, avoided, by submitting the whole of the dispute, in the mode proposed by Spain, to amicable arbitration. And so insignificant was the object in contest, that no one either in or out of parliament has, so far as appears, thought it worth while to enquire whether restoration has really been made in the mode prescribed by the treaty or not.

The ANNIVERSARY of the REVOLUTION in France, which was dated from the fall of the Bastille (July 14), was celebrated throughout the country, and more especially at Paris, with great magnificence. The king assisted in person, and took a solemn oath to maintain the constitution. The national assembly and the armed citizens repeated it amidst the acclamations of innumerable spectators; and the whole kingdom, with one voice, and almost at the same moment, swore to live free or die. In the genuine spirit of antient Greece, was raised on the site of the Bastille a superb column sacred to liberty: and in the  
Grecian

Grecian spirit of citizenship and equality, a decree of the assembly had recently passed, abolishing all artificial distinctions of rank—all the gothic institutions of chivalry and knighthood, ribbands, crosses, armorial bearings, and hereditary titles of honor\*.

In ENGLAND also the French revolution was commemorated in the metropolis, and various other parts, with great festivity and the most cordial gratulation; the characteristic generosity of the people of England displaying itself upon this occasion in a manner very conspicuous and pleasing.

Soon after this transaction, Mr. Burke, who had in the last session uttered so furious an invective against the French revolution in the house of commons, still more transported with rage and rancor at the high degree of prosperity it had now attained, published a book entitled "Reflections on the French Revolution," written with a force of eloquence and energy of declamation calculated to produce the most powerful effects.

The object of this elaborate treatise was twofold: 1. To expose to the public resentment and indignation those persons who had in this country manifested their approbation of the revolution in France; and, 2. To place that revolution

\* After the reduction of the citadel of Syracuse by Timoleon, that great man did not, as we are told, spare the place on account of its beauty and magnificence: but, on the contrary, he invited the Syracusans by public proclamation to join in the destruction of that bulwark of despotism: and, the building being levelled with the ground, he erected a common hall there for the seat of judicature, at once to gratify the citizens and to shew that a popular government should be elevated on the ruins of tyranny. When, after thus gloriously re-establishing the liberty of Sicily, an envious and factious demagogue preferred a public accusation against him in the assembly of the people, who could not suppress the emotions of their indignation; he immediately stilled the tumult by declaring, "that he had voluntarily undergone so many labors and dangers, that the meanest Syracusan might have recourse when he pleased to the laws:" adding, "that he could not sufficiently express his gratitude to the Gods, in permitting him to see all the Syracusans enjoy the liberty of saying what they thought fit." Let the admirers of such distinctions declare, what titles could add dignity to the name of TIMOLEON.



lation itself in an odious and abominable light, as an event to be deplored, detested, and deprecated. And, in an appendix to this work, he with most atrocious and unexampled malignity invites and exhorts all christian princes to make, what he styles, "a common cause with a just prince dethroned by rebels and traitors." The deluded people of France, to be rescued from the evils they had brought upon themselves, must, as he affirmed, be **SUNDUED**. And he intimates that this war, or crusade, is to be conducted on principles different from any former one. "The mode of civilized war," says he, "will not be practised; they must look for no modified hostility; all which is not battle will be **MILITARY EXECUTION**." The members of the revolution society, and the other commemorators of the French revolution, he inveighs against in terms of the most unqualified abuse; and he charges Dr. Price in particular with having *fulminated*, in his revolution sermon, principles little short of treason and rebellion. "His doctrines," says Mr. Burke, "affect our constitution in its vital parts. He affirms that his majesty is almost the only lawful king in the world, because the only one who owes his crown to the choice of his people. As to the kings of the world, all of whom *except* ONE, this arch-pontiff of the rights of men, with all the plenitude, and with more than the boldness, of the papal deposing power in its meridian fervor of the twelfth century, puts into one sweeping clause of *ban and anathema*, and proclaims usurpers by circles of longitude and latitude over the whole globe, it behoves them to consider how they admit into their territories these apostolic missionaries, who are to tell their subjects they are not lawful kings. Nothing can be more untrue, than that the crown of this realm is held by his majesty by the choice of the people. Whilst the legal conditions of the **COMPACT** of **SOVEREIGNTY** are performed he holds his crown, as Mr. Burke virtually affirms,

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in CONTEMPT of their choice\*:" *i. e.* according to this novel and extraordinary mode of reasoning, in conforming his conduct to the conditions of the national choice, he reigns in actual contempt of their choice. Dr. Price having asserted the abstract right of the people, as exemplified at the revolution, to depose their governors for misconduct, and frame a government for themselves; Mr. Burke says, "the people of England utterly disclaim it; they will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes." But *how* the people can, in any given or possible circumstances, *resist their own act*, is a paradox which Mr. Burke attempts not to solve. Certain it is that Dr. Price advanced, in this famous discourse, no other principles than those which Mr. LOCKE had urged a hundred years before in defence of the title of king William and the validity of the revolution government. Amongst innumerable passages to the same purpose, a single citation may well suffice in vindication of a doctrine resting on the immovable foundation of common sense. "Though in a constituted commonwealth," says that immortal writer, "standing upon its own basis, and acting according to its own nature, that is, acting for the preservation of the community, there can be but one supreme power, which is the legislative, to which all the rest are and must be subordinate; yet the legislative being only a FIDUCIARY POWER, to act for certain ends, there remains still in the people a supreme power to remove or alter the legislative, when they find the legislative act contrary to the trust reposed in them. For all power given with trust for the attaining an end, being limited by that end, whenever that end is manifestly neglected or opposed, the trust must necessarily be *forfeited*, and the power devolve into the hands of those that gave it, who may place it anew where they shall think

\* The words of Mr. Burke are literally "the choice of the Revolution Society." But if his majesty reigns in contempt of the choice of one part of the people, he reigns doubtless, by a parity of reason, in contempt of every part.

think best for their safety and security. And thus the community perpetually retains a supreme power of saving themselves from the attempts and designs even of their legislators, whenever they shall be so foolish or so wicked as to lay and carry on designs against the liberties and properties of the subject. If they who say this hypothesis lays a foundation for rebellion, mean that it *may* occasion civil wars or intestine broils, to tell the people that they are absolved from obedience when illegal attempts are made upon their liberties and properties, they may as well say, upon the same ground, that honest men may not oppose robbers or pirates, because this may occasion disorder or bloodshed. I desire it may be considered what kind of peace there will be in the world, which is to be maintained only for the benefit of robbers and oppressors. Polyphemus's den gives us a perfect pattern of such a peace; such a government, wherein Ulysses and his companions had nothing to do but quietly to suffer themselves to be devoured. Are the people to be blamed if they have the sense of rational creatures, and can think of things no otherwise than as they find and feel them? And is it not rather their fault, who put things in such a posture, that they would not have them thought as they are? But whether the mischief hath oftener begun in the people's wantonness or in the rulers' insolence, I leave to impartial history to determine."

From the date of the fatal publication of Mr. Burke, who seemed ambitious to signalize himself by setting not merely a palace or a temple, but the world itself on fire, the nation was divided into two violent and openly hostile parties. The tory faction, which had hitherto scarcely dared to whisper their dislike—now, under the sanction of Mr. Burke's authority, became bold and clamorous in their vociferations. And the principles advanced by Mr. Burke, ever grateful to the ear of princes, at once obliterated all past offences, and placed him in the foremost rank of favorites and courtiers. This extraordinary  
production

production gave rise to numberless replies, of which by far the most memorable was that written by Thomas Paine, the author of the famous pamphlet styled **COMMON SENSE**, which by its almost magical effect on the minds of the people of America, at a most important crisis, paved the way for the declaration of independency. His present work, **RIGHTS OF MAN**, was written with no less power of intellect and force of language; and made a correspondent, perhaps an indelible, impression upon the public mind. Not content with pointing out and exposing with the most sarcastic severity the absurdities and misrepresentations of Mr. Burke—not content with painting in just and striking colors the abuses and corruptions of the existing government, he with daring and unhallowed hand attacked the principles of the constitution itself—describing it in terms the most indecent as radically vicious and tyrannical; and reprobating the introduction of aristocracy or monarchy, under whatever modifications, into any form of government, as a flagrant usurpation and invasion of the unalienable rights of man. “When we survey,” says this temerarious writer, “the wretched conditions of man under the monarchical and hereditary systems of government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoverished by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that those systems are bad, and that a **GENERAL REVOLUTION** in the principle and construction of governments is necessary.”

This pamphlet unfortunately appearing at a time when a large proportion of the community, and those the most zealously attached to liberty, were from causes already specified in a state of great irritation and discontent; and the book, notwithstanding its absurd and mischievous political positions, being written in a style and manner which “came home to men’s business and bosoms,” innumerable converts were made to its general system, and infinite pains were taken to circulate it amongst the body of the people.

people\*. Political associations were also instituted in every part of the kingdom, professing to have in view the re-form of the constitution, but which with too much reason were suspected really to aim at its subversion. Such were the lamentable consequences resulting from the rashness and folly of Mr. Burke—whose boasted *panacea* operated upon the body-politic as a most deadly poison; and which served to prove that learning, parts, and eloquence may subsist in the highest perfection, without being accompanied with a single particle of wisdom.

The new parliament assembled on the 25th of November, 1790. In his opening speech, the king signified "his satisfaction that the differences with Spain were brought to an amicable termination. He observed, that  
since

\* A few detached quotations from this famous publication may serve as specimens, to gratify curiosity, of the wonder-working power with which it cannot be denied to have been written. "The countries of the old world have been long harraßed by the quarrels and intrigues of their governments. Age after age has rolled away for no other purpose than to behold their wretchedness. Invention is continually exercised to furnish new pretences for revenue and taxation. It watches prosperity as its prey. All monarchical governments are military. War is their trade, and plunder their object—wearied with human butchery, they sit down to rest, and call it peace.—If we would delineate human nature with a baseness of heart and hypocrisy of countenance that reflection would shudder at, and humanity disown, it is kings, courts, and cabinets, that must sit for the portrait. War is the pharo-table of governments, and nations the dupes of the game.—Government on the old system is an assumption of power for the aggrandizement of itself—on the new, a delegation of power for the common benefit of society. Monarchy is the master-fraud which shelters all others. By admitting a participation of the spoil, it makes itself friends; and when it ceases to do this, it will cease to be the idol of courtiers. There is a morning of reason rising upon man on the subject of government, that has not appeared before. The trade of courts is beginning to be understood; and the association of mystery, with all the artificial sorcery by which they imposed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death-wound; and though it may linger, it will expire. No question has arisen within the records of history that presses with the importance of the present. It is not whether this or that party shall be in or out, or whig or tory, or high or low church shall prevail; but whether man shall inherit his rights, and universal civilization shall take place.—When it shall be said in any country in the world, my poor are happy, neither ignorance nor distress is to be found amongst them—my gaols are empty of prisoners, my streets of beggars—the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppressive—the rational world is my friend, because I am the friend of its happiness—when these things can be said, then may that country boast its constitution and government."

“since the last session of parliament a foundation had been laid for a pacification between Austria and the Porte—that a separate peace had actually taken place between Russia and Sweden : but that the war between Russia and the Porte still continued. The principles on which I have hitherto acted,” said the monarch, “ will make me always desirous of employing the weight and influence of this country in contributing to the restoration of general tranquillity.”

The terms of the convention with Spain were approved and ratified in both houses by great majorities—but not unanimously. For the papers and documents relative to the negotiation being partially withheld, Mr. Grey moved an adjournment, declaring, “ that without them it was impossible to know whether the late disputes were owing to the restless ambition and unjust claims of Spain, or to the rashness, presumption and ignorance of his majesty’s ministers.” In the upper house, the marquis of Landsdowne expressed his “ determination not to join in a vote of approbation of the conduct of ministers, who had permitted a set of unknown adventurers to fit out ships with *fine names*, and under Portuguese colors and papers to break through a system regarding Spanish America, which had been sanctioned by the policy of Europe for more than 200 years.”

To defray the expence of the armament, Mr. Pitt, with the laudable resolution to suffer no permanent increase of debt, proposed various temporary taxes, which would discharge the incumbrance in four years—with the assistance of five hundred thousand pounds, which he had it in contemplation to take from the *unclaimed dividends* lying in the bank of England, the amount of which he estimated at six hundred and sixty thousand pounds. This latter proposition excited a just alarm in all the great chartered companies, and in the commercial and mercantile world in general. It was strongly and ably opposed in the house by Mr. Fox, Mr. Thornton a bank director,  
and

and Mr. Samuel Whitbread, recently returned as member for the borough of Bedford—a young man of great personal and mental accomplishments, of a disposition open, noble, and ingenuous; and whose ardor of mind, bordering on the enthusiasm of public virtue, was happily regulated by an excellent understanding and correct judgment. It was urged, “that agreeably to the terms of the original contract between the government and the public creditors, the directors of the bank are constituted trustees for the public creditor. When the money is once paid into the bank, it ceases to be public money, and is instantly converted into private property; which must there remain a sacred deposit till it is claimed by the private individuals to whom it appertains. And even in case of the expiration of the charter of the bank of England, the directors still remain a corporation by law, for the express purpose of executing their delegated trust. What mischief may not result from the admission of a power in government, arbitrarily to depart from the conditions of the contract actually made with the public? Under the very term *unclaimed dividends*, is indeed veiled a gross fallacy. Exclusive of the dividends of the last three years, which are not properly *unclaimed* but merely *unreceived* dividends, the balance amounts scarcely to a fifth part of the sum which the minister proposes to seize. If the recent and fluctuating balances of the bank are thus liable to seizure, the minister may one day order the money to be paid into the bank, and the next he may without any violation of public faith command it to be repaid into the exchequer. But in fact this is no other than a measure of injustice and violence, calculated to compel the bank to relinquish their trust when the original and express purposes of it are evidently unaccomplished.”

After much hesitation and contest, the minister consented, by way of compromise, to accept of a loan of five hundred thousand pounds from the bank, without interest

so long as a floating balance to that amount should remain in the hands of the cashier.

On the 17th of December (1790) Mr. Burke moved "that the house do resolve itself into a committee, to take into consideration the state of the impeachment of Warren Hastings, esq." This being done, he made a second motion, "that an impeachment by this house, in the name of the commons of Great Britain against Warren Hastings, esq. for high crimes and misdemeanors, is still pending." From this proposition, the entire corps of lawyers in the house with scarcely an exception declared their total dissent: and Mr. Erskine, whose talents at the bar were of the highest rank, and who had in the general tenor of his practice distinguished himself by his zealous attachment to the principles of the constitution, in an elaborate speech endeavored to shew that in consequence of the dissolution of parliament the impeachment had *abated*; and on this ground he was supported by Mr. Hardinge, Mr. Mitford, and Sir John Scott.

Upon this great question, in the decision of which the honor, the dignity, and authority of the house were so deeply involved, the speaker with great propriety rose to deliver his opinion. "If the maxim laid down by the lawyers were admitted as just, the consequence was obvious. The impeachment of a profligate or corrupt minister might, by the insidious intervention of the prerogative, at any time be rendered nugatory and abortive. In the view of the constitution, and even by the forms of parliament, the impeachment is preferred not by the house of commons merely, but by all the commons of England; and the house can be considered in relation to the prosecution as no more than the agents and attorneys of the people at large. A second house of commons therefore, though certainly possessing a discretionary power of dropping the prosecution, if upon due consideration they are of opinion that it does not rest upon a just foundation, are as certainly  
at



at full liberty to proceed in it, if in their judgment conducive to the safety or the interests of the state. In an impeachment of the nature of the present, it would scarcely be imagined that twenty-two complex articles could by any mode of investigation be decided upon in a single session. If then, agreeably to the genius of the ancient constitution, parliaments themselves were to be made annual, the labor would be truly syssiphean; and such a trial *never* could arrive at a legal termination. Such were the plain dictates of common sense; but in resorting to rules of law, and precedents of parliament, doubts and difficulties presented themselves. Upon those remote and obscure precedents which occurred previous to the civil wars of the last century little stress was laid: but during the reign of king Charles II. the question had come repeatedly under the formal and regular discussion of both houses. These precedents, and such as had since occurred, the speaker had accurately examined; and in his report of them upon this occasion commented upon with great judgment and ability. In the famous case of lord Danby (A. D. 1679), the parliament was unquestionably dissolved, for the purpose of screening the minister from the effects of the impeachment then actually pending against him. But the next parliament understood their privileges too well to make the slightest concession on this important constitutional point. And in compliance with the claims of the commons, the house of peers, March 19th, 1678-9, RESOLVED, 'that the dissolution of the last parliament doth not alter the state of the impeachments, (viz. that of the earl of Danby, and the lords accused as parties in the popish plot) brought up by the commons in that parliament.' In conformity to this decision, the trial of the earl of Danby was continued in no less than four successive parliaments, till in February 1683-4, no parliament being then sitting, or likely to sit, his lordship was bailed by authority of the court of king's bench.

" On the 19th of May 1685, the first and only parliament of king James II. was convened; and the question coming immediately before them, respecting the validity of the proceedings on the late impeachment, it was almost unanimously determined, that the resolution of March 1679† be reversed and annulled; and lord Danby and the other lords were discharged from their recognizances. But it being evidently the province of the peers in their judicial capacity *jus dicere* and not *jus dare*, the reversal of the declaratory resolution of 1679 was regarded by the commons as of no weight or authority whatever. In the second parliament convened after the revolution, an order was made by the lords, April 1690, to take into consideration, whether impeachments continue from parliament to parliament; but the house adjourned the decision of this question from time to time till the parliament was prorogued. And on their next meeting, Oct. 1690, the earls of Peterborough and Salisbury, impeached by the preceding parliament, were discharged from their bail; but whether in virtue of the act of free and general pardon that had recently passed, or of the resolution of May 1685, is not expressed.

" In 1695, the earl of Danby, now duke of Leeds, was a second time impeached, on grounds totally distinct from the former: and this impeachment, notwithstanding the reversal of 1685, continued pending under several successive parliaments, though for the most part in an almost dormant state, for no less than six years; till on the 24th of June 1701, the house of lords resolved, ' That articles having been exhibited against the duke of Leeds, to which he

† In the conference between the two houses, which preceded and gave rise to this famous resolution, serjeant Maynard, one of the managers of the impeachment, said, " That which is most insisted upon is, that the charge now made against this lord was presented in another parliament. It is true. But under favor, what is once upon record in parliament ~~may~~ at any time afterwards be proceeded upon. I conceive it *has* been done. However, in a case of this nature—if there were not, I hope you would MAKE A PRECEDENT." In the case of lord Stafford, who urged in arrest of judgment that the impeachment was pending in three different parliaments, the house refused, as a point already determined, to hear the arguments of counsel upon it.

he had answered, and the *commons not prosecuting*, the impeachment and articles should be dismissed.'

" On the 1st of April 1701, the earls of Portland and Orford and the lords Somers and Halifax were impeached: but the commons refusing to exhibit articles against them in the mode prescribed by the peers, these impeachments were on the last day of the session dismissed.

" The next parliament, which met December 1701, it is true, took no steps whatever to revive the impeachment; not that they admitted the principle of abatement by dissolution, but that, being of a political complexion totally different from the preceding parliament, they, with a great majority of the people of England, considered the public conduct of these great WHIG LORDS not only as innocent, but in the highest degree meritorious.

" In July 1715, the earl of Oxford was impeached. In June 1716, the parliament was prorogued; and on their subsequent meeting, February 1717, the earl petitioning that his imprisonment might not be indefinite, a committee was appointed by the house to search for and report such precedents as relate to the continuance of impeachments from session to session, and from parliament to parliament; which report being read, it was moved to resolve, ' That the impeachment of the commons against the earl of Oxford is determined by the intervening prorogation.' This was negatived on the division by 87 to 45 lords. But a protest ensued signed by ten lords, in which the general proposition is assumed, that a dissolution would determine the impeachment; and their lordships affirm, that there is no essential difference in law between a prorogation and dissolution. If so, the inference surely is, that the 87 lords would have decided similarly in the case of dissolution. It deserves specific notice, that lord chief justice Holt, that great authority on all points of constitutional law, in the case of Peters and Benning, 13th William III. publicly delivered it as his opinion notwithstanding the existing

resolution of 1685, that impeachments begun in one parliament might be prosecuted in another. And this appears to have been at all times the prevailing opinion of the WHIGS. Upon a general review of these facts and precedents, the speaker gave it as his deliberate and decided judgment, that the impeachment was still legally pending; and that the resolution of 1685, passed, as there was reason to believe, by the corrupt influence of the court, and in defiance of a solemn prior decision of both houses, and which in no instance since the revolution had been formally and avowedly acted upon, was wholly invalid and nugatory."

In this opinion Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and the most eminent parliamentary authorities on both sides concurred. The motion of Mr. Erskine for a *search* into precedents was negatived by a majority of 143 to 30 voices; and the original motion of Mr. Burke triumphantly carried without a division.

After a short interval, Mr. Burke made a third motion, "that the managers be instructed to proceed to no other parts of the impeachment, excepting such as relate to contracts, pensions, and allowances;" which was carried with trivial opposition.

By the resolution of the 23d of December 1790, the lords found themselves reduced to a dilemma not very pleasant. On a message from the commons, that they were ready to proceed in their evidence, a committee was appointed by their lordships to search into precedents, which occasioned a suspension of the business till nearly the conclusion of the session. At length the report being made, lord Portchester moved, May 16, "that their lordships now proceed in the trial." This was opposed by the lord chancellor, who recommended the appointment of a second committee to search for more precedents, and defended by lord Loughborough, now the oracle of whiggism in the house, in a very able speech, in the course of which

which he warned their lordships "not to act uncautiously with regard to the popular part of the constitution. Let them not deny that the people were any thing, lest they compelled them to think they were every thing. In commenting upon the precedents before the house, he pointed out the fallacies of sir GEORGE JEFFRIES and other COURT SYCOPHANTS, and rested his arguments on the authority of the great constitutional lawyers Hale, Holt, and Foster. His lordship said, he had it in charge from the lord president, lord Camden, who was prevented from personal attendance, to state that nobleman's opinion as perfectly coincident with his own: and the lord president had left with him an opinion of the famous Selden, that the new parliament, convened in consequence of the Duke of Buckingham's impeachment 1628, were authorized to have called upon their lordships for judgment against the duke." The abatement of the impeachment was on the other hand maintained by lord Kenyon, lord Abingdon, &c. but on the division, the motion of lord Portchester was carried by a great and decisive majority. And their lordships, with the resolution of 1685 still standing in their journals, acquainted the house of commons by message, that they were now ready to proceed in the trial. But very little progress was made in it during the short remainder of the session.

Soon after the recess of parliament (February 21, 1791), Mr. Mitford, a lawyer of eminence in the house, moved, with the previous sanction and approbation of government, for a bill to relieve the English catholics from the legal penalties still existing and in force against them. The proposed act of toleration was however confined to such of the catholics as should subscribe a certain declaration or *protest* against the assumed authority of the pope, &c. drawn up in terms to which it could scarcely be expected that the majority of catholics could conscientiously assent.

Mr.

Mr. Fox rose to object to the bill, not for what it did, but for what it did not contain. He entreated that the bill might be made general. "Let the statute book, said this great statesman and advocate of toleration, be revised, and strike out all those laws which attach penalties to mere opinions." And Mr. Burke joined in reprobating the absurdity and iniquity of those statutes which condemn every man who worships God in his own way, as guilty of treason against the state. Mr. Pitt commended these sentiments, but thought it not *prudent* to *act* upon them; and the bill passed in its present form: in consequence of which a most invidious and mischievous line of distinction was drawn between the protesting and non-protesting catholics, neither of whom were chargeable with, or suspected of, the slightest tincture of disloyalty to the state.

In the course of the session, Mr. Fox, ever active in the cause of liberty, moved for a bill to ascertain the rights of juries in the matter of libel. With respect to the pretended distinction between law and fact, Mr. Fox observed, "that when a man was accused of murder, a crime consisting of law and fact, the jury every day found a verdict of guilty: and this was also the case in felony and every other criminal indictment. Libels were the only exception, the single anomaly. He contended, that if the jury had no jurisdiction over libels, the counsel who addressed them on either side as to the criminality of the publication were guilty of a gross and insolent sarcasm. Mr. Fox put this matter in a remarkably strong point of view, by adverting to the law of treason. It was admitted on all hands, that a writing might be an overt act of treason. In this case, if the court of king's bench were to say to the jury, 'Consider only whether the criminal published the paper—do not consider the nature of it—do not consider whether it correspond to the definition of treason or not'—would Englishmen endure that death should be inflicted without a jury having had an opportunity of delivering

vering their sentiments, whether the individual was or was not guilty of the crime with which he was charged? Mr. Fox wished to know, whether the modern doctrine of libels did or did not extend to high treason?" On its transmission to the house of lords, the bill was opposed on the second reading by the lord chancellor, on pretence of its being too late in the session to discuss a measure of such importance. The principle of the bill was most ably defended by the law lords Camden and Loughborough, with whom lord Grenville concurred; but the bill was finally postponed.

The evidence on the slave trade being at length closed, Mr. Wilberforce, on the 18th of April 1791, brought forward his long expected motion of abolition, which he introduced with a copious and masterly display of the arguments in favor of that measure. The crimes and villainies to which this horrid traffic had given rise, were detailed with a minuteness which placed not merely the persons actually concerned, but human nature itself, in a light the most degrading and detestable. And the mover remarked with all the eloquence of feeling and of truth, that the history of this commerce was written in characters of blood. "Let us, said he, turn our eyes for relief from this disgraceful scene to some ordinary wickedness." No such relief, however, was as yet to be obtained from the justice and humanity of the house; for, on concluding his speech with moving "for a bill to prevent the farther importation of African negroes into the British colonies," it was negatived by a majority of seventy-five voices.

Had the same motion been made two years before, while the feelings of the house were freshly awakened, there can scarcely exist a doubt but that it must have succeeded. Such is the importance of seizing the fortunate and favourable moment of action! To qualify this refusal, a bill was introduced and passed, for chartering a company for the purpose of cultivating West Indian and other tropical products

ducts at SierraLeona on the coast of Africa, by the use of free negroes; an experiment which is likely to be productive, at no distant period, of very important effects.

It had been long a subject of complaint, that the great and extensive province of Canada continued under a government in the highest degree arbitrary and despotic. This government was indeed acknowledged to be merely temporary; but excuses were not wanting to prolong the duration of it. At length Mr. Pitt, in pursuance of an intimation in the royal speech, moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal certain parts of the act respecting the government of Canada passed in the 14th year of his majesty's reign; and to enact farther provisions for the better government thereof. By the proposed bill, the province was divided into two distinct governments, by the appellations of upper and lower Canada. Councils nominated by the sovereign, and houses of assembly chosen by the people, were established in each. The *habeas corpus* act was asserted as a fundamental law of their constitution: and by a very important and admirable clause the British parliament were restrained from imposing any taxes whatever, but such as might be necessary for the regulation of trade and commerce; and to guard against the abuse of this power, the produce of such taxes was to be at the disposal of the respective provincial legislatures. Upon the whole, this bill contained a noble charter of liberty, and did honor to the minister who proposed, and to the assembly which adopted it. The clauses in the bill which militated against the general principle of it, were opposed by Mr. Fox with extraordinary animation and ability. "The great object of all popular assemblies," Mr. Fox said, "was, that the people should be fully and fairly represented; but when the assembly of one province was to consist of only fifteen, and the other of thirty persons, they deluded the people by a mockery of representation. They seemed to give them a free constitution, when in fact they withheld it.



it. And he hoped it would never be said, that the constitution of Canada was modelled after that of England. That these representatives should be elected for the term of seven years, he reprobated as equally inconsistent with freedom. Even in England, where the frequent return of elections was attended with so much real inconvenience, the propriety of the septennial bill was justly a subject of doubt: but in a country so differently circumstanced as Canada, there could be no plausible objection to annual or at most triennial elections. Another strong ground of objection with Mr. Fox was, that the legislative councils were unlimited as to numbers by any other restriction than the pleasure of the king; to whom a power was also reserved of annexing to certain honorary and titular distinctions an hereditary right of sitting in council. As to hereditary honors, or hereditary powers, to say they were good or not, as a general proposition, was difficult—but he saw nothing so good in them as to warrant their introduction into a country where they were not known. He did not think it wise to destroy them where they existed; but to create them where they did not exist, he considered as exceedingly unwise. He could not account for it, unless it was that, Canada having been formerly a French colony, there might be an opportunity of reviving those titles of honor, the extinction of which some gentlemen so much deplored, and to revive in the west that spirit of chivalry which had fallen into so much disgrace in a neighbouring country.”

These incidental expressions awakened the resentment of Mr. Burke, who on the re-commitment of the bill, May 6, rose, as he said, to speak to its general principle. He enlarged upon “the importance of the act which they were now about to perform. The first consideration was, the competency of the house to such an act. A body of rights commonly called the *rights of man* had been lately imported from a neighbouring kingdom. The principle  
of

of this new code was, that all men were by nature free, and equal in respect of their rights. If this code therefore were admitted, the power of the house could extend no farther than to call together the inhabitants of Canada to choose a constitution for themselves. The practical effects of this system might be seen in St. Domingo and the other French islands. They were flourishing and happy till they heard of the rights of man. As soon as this system arrived among them, Pandora's box, replete with every mortal evil, seemed to fly open; hell itself to yawn, and every demon of mischief to overspread the face of the country." Mr. Burke continuing to launch out into the most violent invectives against the constitution and government of France, was repeatedly and loudly called to order, and at length compelled to sit down.

Mr. Fox, when the tumult had subsided, with firmness defended his former sentiments relative to the French revolution; and repeated, "that he thought it upon the whole one of the most glorious events in the history of mankind. In this assertion however he spoke of the *revolution*, not of the *constitution*, which still remained to be improved by experience and accommodated to circumstances. The rights of man, which his right honorable friend had ridiculed as visionary, were the basis of the British constitution. Our statute book recognized 'the original inherent rights of the people as men, which no prescription could supersede, no accident remove or obliterate.' These had once been the principles of his right honorable friend, from whom he had learned them. His right honorable friend had said with equal energy and emphasis, 'that he knew not how to draw a bill of indictment against a whole people.' Having been taught by him that no revolt of a nation was caused without provocation, he could not help rejoicing at the success of a revolution resting upon the same basis with our own—the immutable and unalienable rights of man."

Mr.

Mr. Burke rose again, and in vehement terms insisted "that he was perfectly in order; and that the discussion of the Quebec bill was a proper opportunity to put the country on its guard against those dangerous doctrines which prevailed in France, and which had found so many advocates here. He observed, that he had differed on many occasions from Mr. Fox, but there had been no loss of friendship between them. But there was something in the ACCURSED French constitution that envenomed every thing."

Mr. Fox on hearing this interrupted him, saying "there was no loss of friendship."

Mr. Burke replied "THERE WAS—he knew the price of his conduct; he had done his duty, and their friendship WAS at an END."

Mr. Fox, on whom the attention of the house was now eagerly fixed, rose to reply, but his feelings were too powerful for utterance. All the ideas so long cherished, of gratitude, esteem and affection, rushed upon his susceptible and generous mind; and involuntary tears were observed to steal down his cheek. A profound and expressive silence pervaded the house. At length Mr. Fox recovering himself, said, "that however events might have altered the mind of his right honorable friend, for such he must still call him, he could not so easily consent to relinquish and dissolve that intimate connection which had for twenty-five years subsisted between them. He hoped that Mr. Burke would think on past times; and, whatever expressions of his had caused the offence, that he would at least believe such was not his intention."

The concessions of Mr. Fox made no visible impression on the haughty and unbending temper of Mr. Burke; and from this day a schism took place in the politics of the opposition party, which has been productive of very important consequences.

As

As the most luminous introduction to the principal-remaining transaction of this session of parliament, it will be proper now to avert to the actual situation of affairs on the continent.

No sooner had Leopold king of Hungary assumed the Austrian sceptre, than he resolved on terminating the war with Turkey; and under the powerful mediation of England and Prussia, a convention was concluded August 1790, at Reichenbach, after a negotiation of some months, protracted in the unavailing hope of retaining possession of Belgrade, that important fortress, which, fifty years before, England had exerted her utmost influence to secure to the house of Austria. But now, swayed by Prussian counsels, and eagerly solicitous to advance the interests of that upstart and insolent power, in contra-distinction to those of Austria, the antient and genuine ally of Britain, she harshly and peremptorily insisted on its restitution, in common with all the other Austrian conquests, to the Ottoman Porte. In return, the Austrian Netherlands were guaranteed to the house of Austria, and the possession of the imperial crown eventually ensured to his Hungarian majesty. The Flemings refusing, notwithstanding their present state of abandonment, to return to the Austrian dominion, a great military force was sent into the country in the autumn of 1790, under the command of marshal Bender, which quickly effected their total reduction; and on the 1st of January, 1791, a solemn *te deum* was sung at Brussels in celebration of that happy event.

Sweden also, disappointed in her views and projects of ambition, thought proper to sign a separate peace with Russia, August 1790, on the basis of the former treaties of Abo and Nyfstadt.

The courts of London and Berlin, elated with the success of their mediation at Reichenbach, now in high and arrogant language signified to the empress of Russia their pleasure that peace should be restored between the Otto-  
man

man and Russian empires, on the terms of a general restitution of conquests. The empress replied with equal haughtiness, "that she would make peace and war with whom she pleased, without the intervention of any foreign power." Not however choosing too far to provoke the resentment of these formidable and self-created arbitrators, she secretly intimated her willingness to conclude a peace with Turkey, on the condition of retaining the country eastward of the Neister, as a reasonable indemnification for the expences of the war. This was a waste and desert tract of territory, valuable only for the security it afforded to her former acquisitions, and for including within its limits the strong and important fortrefs of Oczakow. This being peremptorily refused, the empress broke off the conference, and determined to prosecute the war.

On the 28th of March, 1791, Mr. Pitt delivered a message to the house of commons from his majesty, importing, "that the endeavors which he had used in conjunction with his allies to effect a pacification not having proved successful, his majesty judged it requisite, in order to add weight to his representations, to make some further augmentation of his naval force." And this message being taken into consideration, Mr. Pitt enlarged much on the necessity of attending to the preservation of the balance of power in Europe. "The influence of the Turkish empire, he said, was of great effect in the general scale. Its present situation was such as to afford just cause of apprehension to other powers: and to PRUSSIA in particular it must be highly injurious, to suffer the Turkish empire to be diminished in force and consequence. He therefore moved an address, assuring his majesty that his *faithful commons* would make good such expences as may be found necessary." This address was opposed with the whole strength and energy of the opposition.

Mr. Fox said, "the right honorable mover of the address had enveloped himself in mystery and importance,  
but

but explained nothing. When the balance of power was mentioned as a reason for arming, it ought to be shewn how it was endangered. We had no quarrel with the empress of Russia: we had no alliance with Turkey. But by the absurd pride of interfering in the affairs of every sovereign state, we involved ourselves in continual expence, and were exposed to the perpetual hazard of war. It was to second the ambitious policy of Prussia, and not for any interests of our own, that we were now called upon to arm. The Czarina, it was well known, had offered to give up all her conquests but a barren district, unprofitable and worthless except for a single place contained in it, which place was Oczakow. But would any one seriously pretend that the balance of Europe depended upon the trivial circumstance, whether Oczakow should in future belong to the empire of Russia or of Turkey? That this was even with ministers themselves a novel idea, was plain; for Oczakow had been taken in 1788, and in 1789 his majesty had assured the parliament and the nation, that the situation of affairs was such as promised us a continuance of peace." The question was at length carried in favor of the address by 228 to 135 voices.

The prospect of a war with Russia, on these frivolous grounds, gave more dissatisfaction to the public at large than any measure of Mr. Pitt's administration. And on the 12th of April Mr. Grey moved, and supported with a very extensive display of knowledge and political ability, a series of resolutions expressive of the impolicy and inexpediency of this measure. On the part of the ministry the importance of Oczakow was magnified to a most ridiculous excess. It was styled the key of Constantinople, whence it led to the acquisition of Alexandria and the Lower Egypt. The success of the ministry in former negotiations was ostentatiously dwelt upon, and the confidence of the house challenged in terms unusually strong and pointed.

Mr.

Mr. Sheridan with sarcastic keenness asked the minister, "on what basis this confidence was to rest. Did he recollect the different prospect to which we had been directed to turn our eyes in this year? Did he recollect that this was the promised millennium, that halcyon year in which we had been flattered, instead of fresh burdens, with a reduction of expence, and a clear surplus for the extinction of the public debt? The system we had adopted in concert with Prussia was, he said, a system of ambition, of vain glory, and of intrigue, and it had fastened upon us a concern above all others pernicious—that of English interference in German politics. As to the doctrine of confidence in ministers, he totally abjured it. The more constitutional doctrine was that of suspicion and watchfulness. The minister had indeed risen wonderfully in his demands. He recollected the time when he had contented himself with asking only for a guarded and rational confidence. He then advanced to the pitch of a firm and steady confidence; and it was at last grown to a blind and implicit confidence. And it appeared that the degree of confidence required rose in an exact *ratio* to the absurdity of the measure to be adopted." On the division, the effect of the extreme unpopularity of the war without doors, and the ability with which it was exposed and ridiculed within, strikingly appeared, the numbers being 179 ayes to 259 noes.

To enter into a war in the face of such a minority was wholly impossible. The point in dispute was instantly and wisely given up by the ministers; Oczakow and its district remained with Russia; and in the course of the ensuing summer (August 1791) peace was concluded between the two empires. The session of parliament terminated June 10, 1791, his majesty expressing his perfect satisfaction at the zeal with which the two houses had applied themselves to the consideration of the different objects which he had recommended to their attention.

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The state of affairs in France, though passed over in total and discreet silence in the speech, was now become very critical. That once popular minister M. Necker, finding his measures thwarted and opposed by the more popular leaders of the assembly, and equally destitute of the confidence of the court, had sent in his resignation September 1790, and was suffered to retire without one expression of public regret—such is the caprice and inconstancy of the people! previous to his resignation, but certainly not by his advice, a decree had passed the assembly, imposing an oath upon the whole body of the clergy “to maintain to the utmost of their power the new constitution of France, and *particularly* the decrees relative to the civil constitution of the clergy.”

By the former decrees of the assembly relative to the clergy, all connexion with the see of Rome, spiritual and temporal, was virtually abolished; and the oath was upon other accounts so obnoxious, that it could not possibly be taken by the majority of the clergy *ex animo*. It was in fact, productive of the most pernicious consequences. The pope by a bull denounced the sentence of excommunication against those of the clergy who took the civic oath: it was refused by multitudes in the church; and those who submitted to it became, in resentment of the outrage offered to their feelings, far more inimical to the constitution and dangerous to the state than before. A most severe and unjust decree was subsequently promulgated, by which the non-juring clergy were not only deprived of their benefices, but subjected to heavy penalties for non-compliance; in consequence of which numerous emigrations of that unfortunate class of men took place.

On the 22d of January, 1791, the king of France communicated to the assembly a letter from Leopold king of Hungary, now advanced to the dignity of emperor, containing strong protestations of amity towards France, but at the same time intimating, that to consolidate that  
friendship



friendship the revocation of the decree of August 4, 1790, will be necessary; that all innovations in virtue of that decree be abolished, and matters put upon their ancient footing. This was the famous decree which annihilated all feudal and seigniorial rights, and in the scope of which several of the petty princes of Germany, possessing fiefs in Lorraine and Alsace, were comprehended; and so far as the right of property was affected by the decree, compensations had been offered by the assembly and by some of these princes actually accepted. This, however, now served as a pretext and cover for the measures in contemplation of the court of Vienna, which had already stationed *cordons* or troops on the Suabian frontier, and northward from the circles of the Rhine to the banks of the Meuse. The assembly, on this occasion, voted a large augmentation of military force, regardless of the intimation of the king, that the emperor had, in this instance, acted merely officially, in conformity to the decrees of the diet. The king himself did not escape the suspicion of entertaining a private and dangerous correspondence with the imperial court; and he was entreated by the assembly, formally and explicitly to announce the revolution which had taken place to the different courts of Europe.

The popular jealousies and discontents were still more openly and rudely indicated. On the 18th of April, being on the point of setting out from Paris to the palace of St. Cloud, to pass the Easter, the royal carriage was stopped by an immense crowd of persons, not all of the lowest rank, under the apprehension of an intended escape, and consequently counter-revolution. And notwithstanding the entreaties and protestations of M. de la Fayette, commandant of the national guard, who attended the king's person, and pledged himself for his security, he was finally compelled to desist from his purpose, and return to the Tuilleries.

On a complaint of this insult to the assembly, the president made a respectful apology to the king; and his majesty *properly attended*, put in execution his design of visiting St. Cloud.

Anxious to regain the ground he had lost, the king, in compliance with the request of the municipality of Paris, dismissed from his person those men who were most notoriously disaffected to the constitution.

M. de Montmorin was ordered to write, in the name of the monarch, a circular letter, expressed in terms the most popular and captivating, to his ambassadors at the different courts of Europe, "to the end," as it is expressed, "that no doubt may remain with regard to his majesty's intentions, his acceptance of the free form of government, and his irrevocable oath to maintain it."

In return, the president of the assembly waited on his majesty with an address of thanks and felicitation for the fresh proof he had given of his regard for the constitution. "For the first time, sire," said the president, "those sacred maxims which announce the rights of man have made their appearance amidst the mysteries of diplomatic correspondence. Strangers shall now learn from yourself, that it was by your aid the French constitution was regenerated, and that you are its guardian, its defender, and its avenger. Seated on the first throne in Christendom, you have given the first example of a great monarch proclaiming the liberties of his people to mankind. A happy calm has now succeeded to the stormy hopes and fears between which the nation wavered in uncertainty. You have now imposed silence on the detractors of our new constitution. The hydra of faction had a hundred heads, and you have cut off the last of them."

To this the king with deep hypocrisy, replied, "I am charmed beyond expression at the warmth of esteem which the national assembly is pleased to express towards me. If they could but read my heart, they would there see  
sentiments

sentiments engraved on it, that would well justify the confidence of the nation. All distrust would then be banished from their bosoms, and we should all be happy."

This, however, was but a transient and fallacious calm; nor was distrust, for a single moment, really banished from their minds. Unhappily the event but too well justified their suspicions.

On the night of the 20th of June (1791), the king, queen, dauphin, and princess Elizabeth, sister to the king, also the count and countess de Provence, suddenly disappeared. They had, as it was quickly discovered, made their escape through a subterranean passage extending from the Tuilleries to the Seine. Monsieur and madame took the road to Mons; the rest of the royal family that of Montmedi. The king left behind him a paper, in which he formally revoked all his past oaths and solemn declarations, as the effect of compulsory influence, prohibiting the ministers from signing any order, and enjoining the keeper of the seals to send them to him when required in his behalf.

On the first emotions of resentment at the discovery of this event, the king's arms and effigies were taken down and broken by the populace of Paris. A proclamation of the assembly, however, soon restored order. The royal authority was formally suspended by a decree of the assembly, and a provisional executive council appointed. The national guard were instantly in arms; and deputations from all the different public bodies appeared at the bar of the assembly, with the strongest and firmest professions of patriotism and obedience.

Scarcely had the first emotions of indignation subsided, when it was announced that the king and queen had been arrested in their progress, at a place called Varennes, near the frontier. They were quickly brought back to Paris, and again quietly consigned to the palace of the Tuilleries.

On the 27th of June, commissioners from the assembly waited upon the king, to receive his written declaration respecting the late event. His majesty asserted, "that he had no intention of leaving the kingdom, but meant merely to fix at Montmedi, till the vigor of the government should be restored, and the constitution SETTLED." The respect due to majesty was still preserved, but confidence was for ever at an end. It was incontrovertibly proved, that the king had long carried on a secret correspondence with M. de Bouillé, governor of Metz, and commandant of the forces on the German frontier, who had sent a detachment to escort the king to Montmedi; a position to be maintained only by force, and whence, in case of necessity, he could easily retreat to the Austrian territory of Luxembourg. The accidental arrest of the king entirely disconcerted these measures; and M. de Bouillé made his escape into Germany, where he published a furious declaration against the assembly, calculated only to injure the cause he meant to serve.

In consequence of the repeated perfidies of the king, it was proposed by some of the bolder, perhaps the wiser members of the assembly, to declare an abdication, and to place the dauphin on the throne. On the question being agitated in the assembly, it was asked, what could be done with the king in case of a deposition; to which one of the members replied, "Let him go and keep school at Corinth." But the milder and more moderate counsels prevailed. The king remained at the Tuilleries, vigilantly guarded, till the fabric of the constitution was completed.

On the 3d of September, the CONSTITUTIONAL ACT was presented to the king, who signified his acceptance of it in writing, September 13; and on the following day he appeared at the assembly, introduced by a grand deputation of sixty members, solemnly to consecrate the assent he had given; concluding with an oath "to be faithful

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to the nation and to the law, and to employ the powers vested in him for the maintenance of the constitution.

On the 30th of September (1791), the constituent national assembly, after an uninterrupted session of two years and four months, terminated its existence by a spontaneous dissolution; leaving behind it, notwithstanding some human errors and frailties, an illustrious and never-dying fame. Under whatever varying form freedom may subsist in France, the primary establishment of it must doubtless be ascribed to the heroic courage and enlightened patriotism of this assembly: and in the emphatic words of the Roman orator it may with propriety be asked, "*quæ enim res unquam, proh sancte Jupiter! in omnibus terris est gesta major, quæ gloriosior, quæ commendatior hominum memoria sempiternæ?*"

In England the anniversary of the revolution in France was again celebrated, not without a certain mixture of indiscretion, considering the lowering aspect of the political horizon in France, contrasted with the brilliant prospect of last year, and the odium it had incurred in consequence of the events which had since taken place in both kingdoms. Party spirit at this period raged throughout England in a more violent degree than had been known since the days of Sacheverel; and in no place more than in the great and opulent town of Birmingham, distinguished by the residence of the celebrated PRIESTLEY, equally famous in the different capacities of philosopher and divine. As a theologian he had signalized himself as the grand restorer of the antient Unitarian system; maintained at the æra of the reformation by Socinus and other learned men of the Polish or Cracovian school; and which, refusing divine honors to the founder of the christian religion, acknowledged him merely in the character of a teacher and prophet sent from God, and demonstrating the authenticity of his mission by *signs and wonders*, which God did by him.

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The extraordinary and transcendent ability with which this simple but obnoxious system was vindicated by Dr. Priestley, as the genuine unadulterated doctrine of primitive christianity, had brought over to his opinions numerous converts, and had excited against him still more numerous enemies. Regarding civil establishments of christianity as the grand barrier to the propagation of the truth, he had in various publications argued against them with great force, inveighing against the corruptions to which they had given rise, though otherwise of a disposition mild and beneficent, with extreme bitterness and acrimony. He had on all occasions expressed himself on the subject of government, as an intrepid and zealous defender of the civil and religious rights of mankind; of this he had given a recent proof in a most able and masterly reply to Mr. Burke's famous book on the French revolution.

It is superfluous to say that he was under these circumstances the object of detestation to the bigoted, of wonder to the ignorant, and of dread to the interested and the artful. Every possible artifice having been put in practice to excite the passions of the populace against him, the day of the commemoration of Gallic liberty was deemed a fit occasion to carry the nefarious designs previously concerted into execution. The friends of liberty, assembled for that purpose at an hotel in the town, were during the dinner insulted by a furious mob without, shouting, with the occasional intermixture of horrid imprecations, CHURCH and KING! which words, it may be observed, however innocent or venerable in their unconnected state, are when conjoined the symbol of all mischief. At five o'clock the company dispersed, but the windows of the hotel were nevertheless broken by the mob, who seemed then inclined to separate.

But this would have been a petty and common revenge. Incited and inflamed anew by their leaders, they bent their  
course

course to the chapel where Dr. Priestley usually officiated; this they set on fire, and afterwards proceeded to the old meeting, which they demolished in the same manner. At ten o'clock the mob, now mad with rage and intoxicated with liquor, took the route of Fair-hill, the residence of Dr. Priestley, about a mile distant from the town. Happily the family had notice just sufficient to effect their escape; but the house, furniture, library, and philosophical apparatus were set on fire, and consumed in their more than Vandalian rage of destruction. The four following days were employed in the demolition of the elegant houses and villas in the town and its vicinity, belonging to those persons who had chiefly distinguished themselves as advocates in the cause of Gallic liberty, or by their attachment to the religious principles of the great heresiarch Dr. Priestley.

During this time the magistrates of the place, who were suspected of conniving at the first beginning of this tremendous riot, and who had not read or attempted to read the riot act, were struck with terror and consternation; nor was any effectual effort made to check these infamous and disgraceful proceedings—far worse indeed than any disorders that had as yet occurred in the progress of the French revolution—till the arrival, on the Sunday evening, of three troops of dragoons from Nottingham; in a short time after which, reinforcements daily arriving, order and tranquillity were perfectly restored. Many of the rioters were taken into custody and brought to trial, but three only were capitally punished. Such was the superior lenity of the government on this occasion, contrasted with the rigors of the special commission issued for the trial of the London rioters in 1780, on which occasion thirteen persons were, under the sanction of the lord president Loughborough, included in the same indictment!

The latter months of the year passed over in gloomy silence. The parliament was not convened till the 31st of  
January

January 1792. The king announced in his speech, " the marriage of his son the duke of York with the princess Frederica, daughter of his good brother the king of Prussia. He informed the two houses that a treaty had been concluded, under his mediation and that of his allies, between the emperor and the Ottoman porte, and preliminaries agreed upon between the latter of those powers and Russia. The general state of affairs in Europe promised a continuance of peace, and he was induced to hope for an immediate reduction of the naval and military establishments."

The address of thanks and approbation moved by Mr. Charles Yorke, and seconded by Sir James Murray, excited some severe animadversions from Mr. Fox, who, in allusion to the cession of Oczakow to Russia, observed, " that it required no moderate share of assurance for ministers to say to gentlemen who had supported their measures as wise and necessary, ' That which you last session contended for as of the utmost importance, we have now abandoned as of none. Will you have the goodness to move an address approving what we have done ?' " Mr. Fox thought it extraordinary that, in mentioning the inestimable blessings of peace and order, no notice was taken of the violent interruption of order which had occurred in the course of the summer. At the close of the eighteenth century we had seen the revival of the spirit and practice of the darkest ages. It would have been well if his majesty had spoken of those riots in the terms they merited. They were not riots for bread—they were not riots in the cause of liberty, which, however highly to be reprobated, had yet some excuse in their principle ; they were riots of men neither aggrieved nor complaining—of men who had set on foot an indiscriminate persecution of an entire description of their fellow-citizens, including persons as eminent for their ability, as blameless in their conduct, and



as faithful in their allegiance, as this or any country could boast."

Mr. Pitt deprecated with warmth the invidious revival of a subject so unpleasant and unprofitable, and wished rather to call the attention of the house to the flourishing condition of the commerce and finances of the nation, of which in a short time he proposed submitting to the house a correct statement. Accordingly on the 17th of February the minister, in the course of a most eloquent and animated speech, delineated a picture of national prosperity, more flattering than even the most glowing imagination had ventured to suggest. "The amount of the permanent revenue, with the land and malt duties annexed, from January 1791 to January 1792, he estimated at 16,730,000*l.* being 300,000*l.* more than the aggregate of the preceding year. The permanent expenditure, including the interest of the debt, the annual million applied towards its extinction, the civil list, and the military and naval establishments, he calculated at 15,810,000*l.* leaving a clear surplus of more than 900,000*l.* In this state of things he thought himself authorized to propose the repeal of a part of the more burdensome taxes, to the amount of about 200,000*l.* per annum; and at the same time to apply the sum of 400,000*l.* to the reduction of the national debt, in aid of the annual million appropriated by parliament. This would still fall far short of his estimate of the national ability, and there was good ground to believe that we had not reached by many degrees the summit of our prosperity. When the debentures to the American loyalists should be discharged, which would happen in about four years, an addition of near 300,000*l.* would accrue to the revenue. In consequence of the general improvement of credit, the three per cents. would soon rise so high as to enable the parliament to effect a reduction of the four, and, as soon as by law redeemable, of the five per cents. which would add the sum of 700,000*l.* or little less to the sinking fund.

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The indefinite additions which might be expected from the increasing produce of the existing taxes, the result of our rapidly increasing commerce, must mock all calculation. Our exports had risen one-third in value since the year 1783, i. e. from 14,741,000*l.* to 20,120,000*l.* and our internal trade had increased in at least an equal proportion. Thus shall we be enabled to make a swiftly accelerated progress in the essential work of liquidating the national debt, and in a very short space of time to reach a point which perhaps not long since was thought too distant for calculation. On the continuance of our present prosperity it is indeed impossible to count with certainty; but UNQUESTIONABLY there never was a time when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect a durable peace than at the present moment." After developing with much ability and sagacity the hidden but operative springs of the returning prosperity of the country, the minister concluded with the following memorable words: "From the result of the whole I trust I am entitled to infer, that the scene which we are now contemplating is not the transient effect of accident, not the short-lived prosperity of a day, but the genuine and natural result of regular and permanent causes. The season of our severe trial is at an end; and we are at length relieved, not only from the dejection and gloom which a few years since hung over the country, but from the doubt and uncertainty which, even for a considerable time after our prospect had begun to brighten, still mingled with the hopes and expectations of the public. We may yet indeed be subject to those fluctuations which often happen in the affairs of a great nation, and which it is impossible to calculate or foresee; but as far as there can be reliance on human speculations, we have the best ground from the experience of the past to look with satisfaction to the present, and with confidence to the future. *Nunc demum redit animus, cum non spem modo ac votum securitas publica, sed ipsius voti fiduciam*

*ciam et robur assumpserit.*" Such were the brilliant hopes which the nation was at this moment of exultation taught to indulge, and with such dazzling splendor rose the morn of a year destined to set in darkness, calamity, and blood!

The papers relative to the Russian armament being laid on the table, Mr. Grey noticed several material omissions, and an entire chasm in the correspondence from October 31, 1790, to May 26, 1791, and moved "that the papers thus withheld be laid before the house." Mr. Pitt affirmed, that the papers called for by Mr. Grey were highly improper to be produced. He did not think it consistent with good policy, to disclose circumstances which might endanger the situation of our public alliances; and again urged the necessity of confidence in the executive government. Mr. Fox indignantly replied, "that the confidence of the nation was placed in their representatives; and if those to whom they had given their confidence should transfer that confidence to the minister, they were *betrayed*, not represented. As to this pretended necessity of confidence, there need be nothing secret where there was nothing wrong; yet pending the negotiation with Russia they were kept in the dark, and by a climax in confidence, when the negotiation was terminated, they were still denied information." In the course of the debate it was forcibly observed, in allusion to the projected war with Russia, "that it would require more eloquence even than that which had been lately employed in describing the prosperity of this country, to justify a measure which put its prosperity so much to the hazard."

On the evidence of the papers actually produced, and the facts publicly ascertained, Mr. Whitbread on the 27th of February (1792) moved a resolution of censure on the ministers, importing, "that Oczakow was not an object of sufficient importance to justify the armed interference of this country" Mr. Whitbread said, "it was the most self-evident of all propositions, that no arrangement affect-

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ing Oczakow could in any way affect the political or commercial interests of Great Britain. We exported nothing thither, we imported nothing from it: the ostensible cause of the dispute, therefore, could not be the real cause. There was ground to believe the existence of a secret negotiation, by which Prussia flattered herself with the hope of obtaining Dantzic and Thorn as a compensation for permitting the empress of Russia to retain possession of Oczakow. It appeared that the empress had so early as December 1789 requested the interference of Great Britain to effect a peace, upon the terms of extending her frontier to the Niefter; and erecting the provinces of Moldavia, Bessarabia, and Wallachia into an independent principality under a christian prince. These terms were refused by the court of London, and the empress was told that no attention would be paid to any terms not resting upon the basis of a *status quo*. At length, after blustering, threatening, and arming, came the humiliating memorial of the 29th of June 1791, which at once conceded all that we had negotiated, threatened, and armed, to obtain."

The motion was ably supported by Mr. Grey, who remarked, "that since the affair of Holland the minister had become intoxicated with power, and fancied he could parcel out kingdoms and provinces at his pleasure. He seemed as much delighted with this idea as Don Quixote with books of chivalry, and amused himself with curvetting in this court, prancing in that, menacing here, vaunting there—in a word, out-heroding Herod."

Mr. Fox took a comprehensive view of the question, and dwelt with much energy and effect on the folly of making Oczakow a primary object of negotiation, and the inconsistency and disgrace of its subsequent abandonment, "Oczakow, said he, was every thing by itself; but when ministers added to Oczakow the honor of England, it became nothing. Oczakow and honor weighed nothing in the scale. Honor is, in the political arithmetic of ministers,

ters, a *minus* quantity to be subtracted from the value of Oczakow. Against the vain theories of men who project fundamental alterations upon grounds of mere speculative objection, the constitution may be easily defended; but when they recur to facts, and shew me how we may be doomed to all the horrors of war by the caprice of an individual, who will not even condescend to explain his reasons, I can only fly to this house, and exhort you to rouse from your lethargy of confidence into the active mistrust and vigilant control which are your duty and your office." On the division there appeared for the question 116, against it 244.

A motion similar to that of Mr. Whitbread was nearly at the same time made by earl Fitzwilliam in the upper house. It was opposed by the lords Grenville and Hawkebury, the latter of whom threw much light on the real motives of the late interference, by expatiating largely on the *ingratitude* of Russia, and the injurious conduct of that power during *the late war*; and it evidently appeared by the language of this secret adviser of public measures, that the ARMED NEUTRALITY of the empress, although twelve years had passed since the date of it, was not yet forgotten or forgiven. And lord Carlisle did not therefore express himself with perfect accuracy, when, in reviewing the political objects of the armament, his lordship said, "he believed they might ALL be resolved into the endeavour to obtain for Prussia *Dantzic* and *Thorn*." The motion was negatived by a majority of 82 to 19 voices.

Although it appeared by the event of the motion of Mr. Wilberforce in the preceding session, that the enthusiasm of parliament on the subject of the slave trade had greatly subsided; that of the public at large was nevertheless increasing, and it had now attained its highest pitch. The table of the house of commons was covered with petitions from all parts of the kingdom, imploring in earnest language the abolition of that iniquitous and inhuman traffic.

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On the 2d of April (1791) the house resolved itself into a committee on the slave trade, at the instance of Mr. Wilberforce, who moved, at the close of a very able speech, a second time the question of abolition. Mr. Wilberforce declared, "that from his exertions in this cause he had found happiness, though not hitherto success. It enlivened his waking and soothed his evening hours, and he could not recollect without singular satisfaction that he had demanded justice for millions who could not ask it for themselves—AFRICA! AFRICA! he exclaimed with passionate emotion, your sufferings have been the theme that has arrested and engages my heart. Your sufferings no tongue can express, nor no language impart." Mr. Wilberforce was powerfully supported by many of the most respectable members of the house; amongst whom Mr. Whitbread particularly distinguished himself by the energy and animation of his remarks, "It was the necessary quality of despotism, he said, to corrupt and vitiate the heart: and the moral evils of this system were still more to be dreaded than the political. But no mildness in practice could make that to be right which was fundamentally wrong. Nothing could make him give his assent to the original sin of delivering man over to the despotism of man. It was too degrading to see, not the produce of human labor, but man himself, made the object of trade."

In consequence of the ardor displayed by the nation at large in this business, it was at length determined to concede what it was now become difficult, perhaps dangerous, to withhold. Mr. Dundas, advanced to the dignity of secretary of state by the resignation of the duke of Leeds—and the organ of the interior cabinet in the house of commons—now therefore, after a plausible speech recommending to the house the adoption of a middle and moderate plan, such as would reconcile the interests of the West India Islands with the eventual abolition of the trade,

thought

thought proper to move that the word " gradual" might be inserted before " abolition."

Mr. Pitt, who had invariably supported the measure of abolition, not as a minister merely, but as a man feeling for all mankind, declared his decided disapprobation of the amendment proposed by his right honorable friend : and, in a speech fraught with argument and eloquence, conjured the house not to postpone even for an hour the great and necessary work of abolition. " Reflect," said Mr. Pitt, " on the 80,000 persons annually torn from their native land ! on the connections which are broken ! on the friendships, attachments and relationships that are burst asunder ! There is something in the horror of it that surpasses all the bounds of imagination. How shall we repair the mischiefs we have brought upon that continent ? If, knowing the miseries we have caused, we refuse even now to put a stop to them, how greatly aggravated will be the guilt of Britain ! Shall we not rather count the days and hours that are suffered to intervene, and to delay the accomplishment of such a work ? I trust we shall not think ourselves too liberal, if we give to Africa the common chance of civilization with the rest of the world. If we listen to the voice of reason and duty, and pursue this night the line of conduct which they prescribe, some of us may live to see a reverse of that picture from which we now turn our eyes with shame and regret. We may live to behold the natives of Africa engaged in the calm occupations of industry, in the pursuits of a just and legitimate commerce. We may behold the beams of science and philosophy breaking in upon their land, which, at some happy period in still later times, may blaze with full lustre ; and, joining their influence to that of pure religion, may illuminate and invigorate the most distant extremities of that immense continent. Then may we hope, that even Africa, though last of all the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length in the evening of her days those blessings  
which

which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world—

— Nos primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis;  
Illic fera rubens accendit lumina vesp̄er.

In this view, as an atonement for our long and cruel injustice towards Africa, the measure now before the house most forcibly recommends itself to my mind. The great and happy change to be expected in the state of her inhabitants is, of all the various and important benefits of the abolition, in my estimation incomparably the most extensive and important." Thus nobly can Mr. Pitt at times redeem his errors, and deviations from rectitude; and still preserve a place in the esteem of the wise, and affection of the good. The amendment of Mr. Dundas was nevertheless carried on the division by a majority of 68 voices. On which he subsequently moved, "that the importation of negroes into the British colonies should cease on the 1st of January 1800." This, on the motion of lord Mornington, was after great difficulty and debate altered to January 1, 1796. A series of resolutions founded on this basis were then agreed to, and sent up for the concurrence of the lords.

But these resolutions were fated to meet with a very cold reception in the upper house; and from a large proportion of their lordships a most determined opposition. As this was a favorite measure with the nation, and had indeed been supported in a peculiar manner by the *voice of the people*, they were highly and justly offended to see the duke of Clarence, third son of the king, commence his career of public life with a violent declamation against the abolition, and invective against its advocates; whom he falsely and foolishly represented as actuated by the spirit of political and religious fanaticism. With a view to protract, and if possible to dismiss the business, the lord chancellor moved, "that evidence be heard, not before a select committee,



mittee, according to the proposition of lord Grenville, but at the bar of the house." This was seconded by lord Hawkebury, the well known and inveterate enemy of the abolition; of whom it has been affirmed with the utmost bitterness of sarcasm, "that in spite of the habitual fraud and falsehood of his character, he is earnest and sincere in his contempt of virtue and hatred of freedom." The motion being carried, the house slept over the business during the remainder of the session."

Mr. Pitt having, in his speech on the motion for the repeal of the test, avowed in the most unequivocal and *un-guarded* terms the right of the dissenters to a full and complete toleration; Mr. Fox embraced the opportunity of bringing forward in the course of this session a motion for the repeal of those penal statutes, which, notwithstanding the existence of the toleration act, were still in force against those who in any manner impugned the doctrine of the TRINITY. He shewed from a specification of authentic *facts*, that these laws were far from being a mere dead letter; not to mention the hatred and opprobrium which they were the means of creating. Such was the wretched bigotry fostered and cherished by these laws, that a bishop of the church (Dr. HORSLEY) had not scrupled in a recent publication to declare "that unitarianism being *heresy*, even the moral good of the unitarians was *sin*." Mr. Fox expressed his ardent wish to extirpate heresy by *fire*—not indeed in the old mode of burning heretics, but by burning all those statutes which formed the code of persecution." Mr. Pitt appeared on this occasion somewhat embarrassed, and rested his opposition chiefly on the disuse and oblivion into which the acts in question had fallen, and the dangerous alarm which might be excited by the repeal—disclaiming in warm terms the principles and character of a persecutor. Mr. Fox in reply remarked, that he knew not how to distinguish between a persecutor and an advocate for penal laws in mat-

ters of religion, which was the precise definition of the term. As to the general alarm, of which Mr. Pitt was apprehensive, it was the bitterest satire upon the spirit of his own administration, to suppose the temper of the public so fatally changed, as not to endure the repeal of laws so execrable, and till a recent period so generally the subject of execration. Mr. Fox's motion was rejected by a majority of 79 voices\*.

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\* As a striking historic contrast to the spirit displayed by the British government at this period, it may not be improper to select a few passages from the speech of M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, a protestant clergyman and member of the national assembly, on moving the 10th article of the declaration of rights, on the subject of religious toleration, and which was received by the assembly with the highest approbation and applause.—“Liberty is a common right. All citizens have a right to it, or no one has. He that would deprive others of their liberty, attacks his own, and deserves to lose it. Shall in the 18th century the barbarous policy be adhered to of dividing a nation into a favored and a disgraced *caste*?—I will not do the nation the injustice to suppose, that it could pronounce the word *intolerance*. But, gentlemen, it is not toleration that I plead for—it is liberty. Toleration! sufferance! pardon! clemency! what ideas of injustice do not these words convey, if difference of opinion be indeed no crime? Toleration! for ever be proscribed the word, which holds us out as citizens that deserve pity; which exhibits us as culpable persons, who require pardon from those whom chance or education leads to think in a manner different from ourselves! Error, gentlemen, is not a crime. He who professes it, takes it for truth—it is truth to him—he is obliged to profess it, and no man, no society of men has a right to forbid him. And who, gentlemen, in this mixture of error and truth, who is he that will dare to affirm he has never been deceived—that truth is constantly with him, and error with others? I demand then, gentlemen, for the French protestants, for all the non-catholics of the kingdom, that they be placed on the same footing in every thing, and without any reserve, with all the other citizens—Permit it not, gentlemen, generous and free nation! do not allow to be cited as a precedent for you, the example of those nations, who, still intolerant, proscribe your worship amongst them. You are not designed to receive examples, but to give them. Europe, which aspires to liberty, expects from you great lessons, and you are worthy to furnish them.—You are too wise, gentlemen, to be astonished that there are men who think differently from you; who worship God in another manner than you do; and you will not regard the difference of opinion as an injury done to you. Taught by the experience of ages, by the errors and the sufferings of your ancestors, you will say without doubt, It is time to lay aside the sword of persecution so deeply stained with the blood of our countrymen. It is time to restore to them their too-long-forgotten rights. It is time to break in pieces those unjust barriers which separate them from us; and to unite in one common bond of affection these oppressed and proscribed citizens, so long estranged from the bosom of their country. They will present themselves to you covered with the blood of their fathers, and they will shew you the marks of their own chains.—My country is free. Let her shew herself worthy of liberty, by equally imparting it to all classes of citizens, without distinction of rank, birth, or religion.”

On the 21st of May, Mr. Whitbread brought forward a motion of enquiry on the subject of the Birmingham riots. He introduced this motion by an excellent speech, containing a copious statement of the facts and circumstances which led to a suspicion, that the magistrates had been most culpably remiss in their duty on this occasion; and even that ministers had been negligent in their exertions for the suppression of those disorders. Mr. Whitbread referred the house to the proceedings of a former house of commons, who, on a similar occasion, A. D. 1716, had addressed the king (Geo. I.) in terms expressive of the utmost indignation and abhorrence of the spirit which had incited those atrocious outrages; and requesting that full compensation might be made to the sufferers. Mr. Whitbread insisted on the disgrace which England would incur in the view of Europe, if a man, who had done so much honor to his country by his philosophical and literary talents, as Dr. Priestley, should fail to obtain a signal reparation for the injuries he had sustained. "Should he," said this animated speaker, "by the spirit of persecution be compelled to abandon his native soil, there is no nation which would not be ready and eager to afford him an asylum. He can go to no country where his fame has not gone before him." Mr. Whitbread said, "he knew that toleration was the language in fashion; but it was very easy for men to have toleration on their lips, and persecution in their hearts." Mr. secretary Dundas, in reply, vindicated the government very satisfactorily from the suspicion of not having exerted themselves to the utmost in quelling the riots. He said, "that government did not prosecute the magistrates who were charged with neglect of duty, because the attorney general was of opinion, that there was no probability of conviction, and an ineffectual prosecution might be attended with very disagreeable consequences." Mr. Whitbread's motion was ably supported by Mr. Smith and Mr. Wind-

ham, but more particularly Mr. Grey, in an admirable speech, well deserving deep and permanent attention.

In answer to some harsh reflections of Mr. Dundas, on the recent conduct of the dissenters, Mr. Grey thus nobly and eloquently expressed himself: "I do not, sir, stand here as the professed advocate of the dissenters; but whilst we exclaim against the rash and intemperate language of some amongst the dissenters, let us impartially and seriously ask ourselves, if no just cause has been given to them of discontent or of resentment? It is well known that the dissenters have ever distinguished themselves as the zealous advocates of the glorious revolution—that they have been always numbered amongst the most firm and steady adherents of the protestant succession, and of the illustrious house of Hanover when that succession was supposed with reason to be in danger; and at a time when the reigning family did not depend upon the CHURCH as its chief bulwark and support. Conscious of their fidelity and attachment to the government under which they lived—an attachment which the circumstances of the times afforded them frequent and decisive occasions to demonstrate—exercising under the express sanction of the state their inherent right of private judgment in religion—they at length applied to the legislature to be restored to the privileges of citizens, of which they had been so long unjustly divested. When this claim was refused with every circumstance of indignity and insult—when they were branded as the implacable enemies of the state—when they were reproached, notwithstanding their uniformly peaceable demeanor, as seditious and factious hypocrites—when the ridiculous and obsolete tory clamor was revived, that the CHURCH *was in DANGER*—when they were told "that the extent of their loyalty might be measured by the blood of a king—can we wonder that they should discover the passions and feelings of men?—that anger should beget anger—that in the collision of zeal against zeal, the voice

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of reason should be overborne and lost? Are we really desirous of establishing universal and permanent content and satisfaction? The experience of all ages shews, that the only effectual mode is to annihilate all legal oppression. While the spirit of intolerance predominates in the counsels of any country, there will necessarily be discontent, resentment, and anger. And it is in vain to expect to obviate the evil consequences of such a system, or to re-establish the general tranquillity, by adding contumely to oppression, or by an attempt to defend injustice by falsehood. We are ourselves zealously attached to the constitution, because we enjoy in their full extent the privileges and immunities derived from it. But what right have we to expect the same attachment from those who are excluded from these privileges? Though to us the constitution is the object of affection and reverence, to them whom it injures and oppresses it is an odious and tyrannic constitution. Wherever political partialities prevail, and political distinctions are injuriously admitted, there political animosities will be excited. Such is the nature of man; and of this we may rest assured, that equity is the only safe and permanent basis of policy: and till we determine to regulate our conduct by this principle, discontents and animosities must and will prevail. And the disorders and commotions which we now lament, are the genuine offspring of that policy to which unhappily for our peace and security we are still resolved to adhere." The motion was finally negatived by a great and decisive majority.

The libel bill introduced in the last session by Mr. Fox, and which was lost in the house of lords, was this session triumphantly carried through both houses, and passed into a law—notwithstanding the pertinacious opposition of the law lords Thurlow, Kenyon, and Bathurst. The marquis of Landsdowne sarcastically observed in the debate, that he did not blame lawyers for making a stand against

against the present bill. It was well worth a struggle on the part of the profession. It was a proud ambitious profession, desirous of obtaining power over all. And if the noble lord at the head of the king's bench could overthrow it, as his lordship had studied politics as well as law, he would reign lord paramount of England." The law lords joined in a protest against the bill, which will remain as a perpetual monument of the triumph of common sense over legal and professional subtilty.

Another point was also gained during this session in favor of the general system of freedom, by a bill introduced into the house of peers by lord Elgin, for the relief of the Scottish episcopalians, who had long been subject to heavy penalties on the original ground of notorious disaffection to the revolution establishment. But, like other *high-flying* and Jacobitical Tories, they were now become most conspicuous for loyalty amongst the loyal. An objection however was started by the lord chancellor, whether, according to a clause in the present bill, specifying the description of persons to be relieved, the state could with propriety recognize the validity of ordination by bishops, exercising their functions independent of the state. And, in his profound knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquity, his lordship ventured even to intimate his doubts, whether bishops could *exist* in any christian country not authorized by the state." But his lordship being assured by the bishop of St. Davids, who spoke in favor of this "afflicted part of the church of Christ," that christian bishops *existed* three hundred years before the happy alliance between church and state took place, under the auspices of the emperor Constantine the great, his lordship was pleased to declare himself satisfied; and the bill passed without any farther opposition.

In consequence of the spirit of discontent, and even of disaffection, by which a considerable proportion of the community seemed at this period to be animated, and  
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which had given rise to various political associations of an alarming nature, and in which ideas of government reform were carried to a visionary and dangerous extreme; it was thought proper by many of the most distinguished advocates of constitutional liberty, about this period to institute a society under the name of the "Friends of the People," for the sole purpose of effecting a reform in parliament on the principles so often stated and so ably enforced by Mr. Pitt, and other judicious patrons of reform, presuming that all other necessary and beneficial reforms would follow in safe and regular gradation. About thirty members of parliament entered their names as members of the association, which also comprehended many of the most eminent characters in the kingdom, whether in respect of political or literary ability. It is remarkable, that this most useful and laudable association, this broad and lofty mound thrown up for the defence of the constitution against the rage of republican innovation, seemed to excite more the alarm of the government than all the other associations united. And when Mr. Grey, himself a member of the new society, gave notice of his intention to move, in the course of the ensuing session, for an enquiry into the state of the representation, Mr. Pitt rose with unusual vehemence to declare "his total disapprobation of introducing, at a period so critical and dangerous as the present, a discussion of such difficulty and importance. This he affirmed was not a time for experiments; and if he was called upon either to risque this, or for ever to abandon all hopes of reform, he would say he had no hesitation in preferring the latter alternative. He saw with concern the gentlemen to whom he alluded, virtually united with others who professed the reform of abuses, and meant the subversion of government." The expediency and policy of timely and temperate reform were on the other hand powerfully argued by the friends of the projected motion. "As to the obnoxious allies of the late associators,

affociators, Mr. Fox said, the objection might be completely retorted by asking the minister, 'whom have you for your allies?' On the one part there are infuriated republicans, on the other the slaves of despotism. The first are the rash zealots of liberty, the latter its inveterate and determined foes." The consternation of the ministers evidently appeared by a ROYAL PROCLAMATION almost immediately issued against the public dispersion of all seditious writings, and against all illegal correspondencies—exhorting the magistrates to vigilance, and the people to submission and obedience.

This proclamation being laid before the house (May 25), and an address moved of approbation and support, it was opposed by Mr. Grey with much warmth, and the proclamation itself condemned in severe terms as a measure insidious and pernicious. The "diligent enquiry" enjoined by the proclamation after the authors and distributors of *wicked and seditious writings*, could only tend to establish an odious and arbitrary system of ESPIONAGE. This was the system which had made the old government of France so much the object of general detestation, and it was a system unworthy of the sovereign of a free people to recommend. Mr. Grey strongly intimated his belief, that the real object of the proclamation was merely to discredit the late association in the view of the public."

This Mr. Pitt disclaimed in very explicit terms; and expressed his high respect for many of the members of the association in question, declaring "that he differed from them only in regard to the time and mode which they had adopted for the attainment of their object. The association in question, he said, did not come within the scope and purview of the proclamation, which was levelled against the daring and seditious principles which had been so assiduously propagated amongst the people, under the plausible and delusive appellation of the rights of man." The address was finally carried without a division, and receiving



ceiving the concurrence of the upper house was presented in form to the king. It was followed by addresses from all parts of the kingdom: and the ministry, finding their strength, commenced prosecutions against a prodigious number of offenders, amongst whom Thomas Paine stood most conspicuous. Notwithstanding the professional ability of Mr. Erskine, whom he had engaged as his advocate, he was found guilty of the charge; but foreseeing the probability of this event, he had previously absconded to France.

The attention of parliament towards the conclusion of the session was forcibly drawn to the situation of India—for some time past involved in a general war, the origin and progress of which it may be proper concisely to explain. From the æra of the peace of Mangalore, concluded by the company with Tippoo Saib in 1784, the power of that prince had been regarded as very formidable. He was avowedly and devotedly attached to the interests of France, to which country he had soon after that event sent a splendid embassy, and established an intimate friendship and alliance. The period however at length arrived, when, France being occupied with other and greater objects, a severe vengeance might be safely taken on the TYRANT OF MYSORE for all his real or pretended perfidies and oppressions. The Dutch East India company had in the last century conquered from the Portuguese two forts, situated within the territory of Mysore, called Cranganore and Acottah. These they had recently disposed of by purchase to the rajah of Travancore, an ally of the English company. Tippoo resenting the conduct of the Dutch, and affirming that the rajah had no right to make any such purchase within the limits of his territory, marched a considerable military force in the summer of 1789 against Cranganore, with a professed intent to reduce it to his dominion. The conduct of the rajah in making the purchase in question, on so precarious and invidious a title, was severely

werely censured by the government of Madras; and Mr. Holland, the president, warned him to desist from his ambitious designs.

In consequence of the powerful mediation thus interposed, Tippoo withdrew his troops, still, however, asserting his claim to the feudal sovereignty of the forts, and offering, as it is said, to submit his pretensions to any impartial arbitration. But on the 1st of May, 1790, the rajah, relying, as it afterwards appeared, on the support of the superior presidency of Bengal, made an offensive attack on the army of Tippoo Sultan; and the war having thus commenced, the English government was *bound in honor and justice* to defend their ally. This the company were the better enable to do, not merely from their knowledge of the state of France, but from the treaties they had actually formed with the nizam of the Decan, and the Mahratta states, for the express purpose of humbling the power of Mysore.

The grand Carnatic army immediately assembling, under the command of general Meadows, marched through the southern or Coimbatore country, and penetrating the *Ghauts* or passes of the mountains, advanced towards the city of Seringapatam, the capital of Mysore,

On the western side, the Bombay army, under general Abercrombie, after reducing Cannanore and several other places on the coast, entered the kingdom of Mysore; which, notwithstanding the pretended oppression of the government, exhibited every where the marks of the highest cultivation and prosperity. The sultan defending himself with great resolution, and no mean display of military skill, general Meadows found himself under the necessity of retreating to the vicinity of Madras; where, in the month of December (1790), lord Cornwallis assumed the command of the army in person.

The plan of the war was now entirely changed, and a grand effort resolved on, to force a passage to Seringapatam through the country lying directly westward of Madras.

On the 21st of March, 1791, the important town of Bangalore was taken by storm, with little loss on the part of the British, but with a dreadful carnage of the unresisting garrison.

On the 13th of May, the army, by extraordinary exertions, arrived in sight of the superb capital of Myfore, defended by the sultan in person: and, on the next day, an action took place, in which Tippoo was said to be defeated; though he does not appear to have sustained any very considerable loss: and the swelling of the Cavery (in an island formed by the branches of which Seringapatam is situated), together with the want of provisions, compelled lord Cornwallis to begin his retreat to Bangalore; almost before his victory could be announced.

General Abercrombie, who had advanced through the *Ghants* on the opposite side, with a view to form a junction with lord Cornwallis, was now also obliged to lead back his army, fatigued, harassed and disappointed, over the mountains they had so lately and with such difficulty passed. During these transactions the troops of the Nizam and the Mahrattas kept discreetly aloof, leaving the burden of the war almost entirely to the British.

But the next campaign, for which lord Cornwallis made unremitted preparations, opened under more favorable auspices.

Early in February, 1792, the eastern and western armies, resuming their former plan of operations, effected, before the end of the month, a junction under the walls of Seringapatam; the forces of the Peishwa and of the Nizam encamping also at a small distance, and furnishing to the British army a plentiful supply of stores and provisions.

On the 7th of February, a general attack was made by moonlight on the lines of the sultan, which was attended with important effects; Tippoo being compelled to relinquish his former advantageous position, which covered his capital,

capital, and Seringapatam was in consequence of this defeat closely and completely invested.

The situation of Tippoo being now in the highest degree alarming and almost hopeless, he thought proper to send a *Vakeel* to the camp of lord Cornwallis to sue for peace; which the British general granted on the severe terms, 1. Of his ceding one half of his dominions to the allied powers, 2. Of paying three crores and thirty lacks of rupees, as an indemnification for the expences of the war. 3. The release of all prisoners; and, 4. The delivery of two of his sons as hostages for the due performance of the treaty.

On the 26th of February, the princes, each mounted on an elephant magnificently caparisoned, proceeded to the British camp, where they were received by lord Cornwallis with all possible demonstrations of kindness and affection. The eldest, Abdul-Kalic, was about ten; the younger, Mirzaud-Deen, about eight years of age. The princes were attired in white muslin robes, with red turbans richly adorned with pearls, and they conducted themselves with a politeness and propriety which astonished the spectators.

On the 19th of March, 1792, the definitive treaty, signed by the sultan, was delivered by the young princes, with great solemnity, into the hands of lord Cornwallis; but the sums specified in the second article not being actually paid, the princes still remained under the safeguard and custody of his lordship.

Though the entire knowledge of these transactions had not reached England when the affairs of India came under the discussion of the house of commons, Mr. Dundas stated the general situation of the company to be in the highest degree flourishing; and, by an intricate deduction of figures, he shewed the surplus of the Bengal revenue for the preceding year to be no less than eleven hundred thousand pounds. "The flourishing state of the revenue was however

ever remarked by Mr. Francis to be not precisely the same thing with the flourishing state of the country, which might be ill able to bear the weight of these impositions. The seizures for non-payment of the land revenue were, he said, most alarmingly notorious: and he held in his hand, at that moment, two Bengal advertisements, the one announcing the sale of seventeen villages, the other of forty-two."

This discussion took place on the 5th of June; and on the 15th the session closed with a speech from the throne, in which his majesty expressed to the two houses "his great concern at the actual commencement of hostilities in different parts of Europe, assuring them that his *principal care* would be to preserve to his people the uninterrupted blessings of PEACE."

The second national assembly of France met October 1, 1791. By an act of patriotic disinterestedness, very indiscreet in its nature, and pernicious in its consequences, the late assembly had decreed, that no person should be eligible to two successive legislatures. The present assembly, therefore, was necessarily destitute of the experience, and, according to the general opinion, of the talents likewise of the former. And being chosen at the precise period when the national resentment was at the highest pitch, they were of a much more anti-monarchical complexion. The opening speech of the king was received nevertheless with great applause; and the president replied in terms of confidence and respect, expressing the united wish of the assembly to comply with the benevolent and patriotic views of the king. "Such, sire," said he, "is our duty, such are our hopes, and the gratitude and blessings of the people will be our reward." The prospect, however, was quickly overcast. By the king's express desire, on his acceptance of the constitutional act, a decree of indemnity had passed respecting the emigrants, without any exception whatever, on the condition of their returning to their country within a limited time. But the agent deputed on  
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this commission to the princes at Coblenz was not only treated with contempt and insult, but actually imprisoned, on pretence of his want of passport.

In consequence of this outrage, and of the continuance of the hostile preparations of the emigrants, a decree passed the assembly early in November (1791), declaring prince Louis Stanislaus Xavier to have forfeited, in case he do not return to the kingdom in two months, his eventual claim to the regency; and, by a subsequent decree, the assembly pronounced the French hostilely assembled on the frontier, guilty of a conspiracy against their country, in case they did not return before the 1st of January 1792; incurring thereby the forfeiture of their estates during their lives, but without prejudice to their children.

On the 18th November a severe decree passed the assembly against the nonjuring clergy, who were accused, with too much reason, of seditious and *incivie* practices.

To both these decrees the king, insensible or careless of consequences, opposed his royal veto. The assembly, astonished at the conduct of the king, addressed him to take effectual measures to prevent the dangers which menaced the country. The king, in reply, assured the assembly, that the emperor had done all that could be expected from a *faithful ally*, by forbidding and dispersing all assemblages of emigrants within his states. And he had acquainted the elector of Treves, that if he did not, before the 15th of January, put a stop to all hostile dispositions, he should be obliged to consider him as the enemy of France.

The assembly, however, were not lulled to security by these empty professions. Whatever was done in favor of the emigrants by the German princes, was plainly done under the sanction of the emperor; and it was now publicly known that the emperor had, in concert with the king of Prussia, signed a convention at Pilnitz in Saxony, August 1791, in the highest degree inimical to France,

although

although no intimation had been given of this transaction from the executive power to the assembly.

The short-lived popularity of the king was now vanished, never to return. Addressees were presented to the assembly from every quarter of the kingdom, indicating their dissatisfaction with the court, and their confidence in the firmness and patriotism of the assembly. M. de Montmorin, unable to withstand the torrent, resigned his office, and M. de Lessart succeeded.

The republican party, in consequence of the incessant tergiversations of the monarch, gained great strength; and, forming themselves into a club or society, assembling at the convent of the jacobin friars, recently dissolved, they acquired the popular, and since famous appellation of JACOBINS. The friends of monarchy, on the other hand, had, from a similarity of circumstances, obtained the name of Feuillans.

The designs of Leopold gradually unfolded. On the 21st of December, official notice was given to the French ambassador at the court of Vienna, that the emperor, understanding the elector of Treves to be under apprehensions from France, had been *constrained* to order marshal Bender to march to his relief and protection.

The king, in communicating this intelligence to the assembly, affected great surprise at the resolution of the emperor. "He could not persuade himself that the *good dispositions* of the emperor were changed; and wished to believe that his imperial majesty had been deceived as to the state of facts, and been made to suppose that the elector had indeed fulfilled all the duties of good neighbourhood."

Preparations were now at last made for war; but the designs of the emperor not being as yet ripe for execution, the elector of Treves thought fit on a sudden to change his tone, and to engage that within eight days the hostile  
assemblages

assemblages within his dominions should be entirely dispersed.

The public discontents and clamors against the king rising very high, and being charged almost openly with treachery to the nation, his majesty was pleased to write (February 17, 1792) a letter to the assembly, contradicting in very haughty terms these injurious reports, propagated by evil-minded people to alarm the public, and calumniate his intentions. "Nothing, he adds, keeps him at Paris but his WILL; and whenever he has reasons to leave it, he will not disguise them."

The correspondence between the courts of Paris and Vienna being laid before the assembly on the 2d of March, it appeared that the imperial troops in the Netherlands would shortly amount to ninety thousand men. And the dispatch of the prince de Kaunitz (February 17) openly avowed the concert formed with other powers for *preserving unimpaired* the monarchy of France; and was throughout expressed in terms of menace and hostility, which left no doubt as to the ultimate determination of the imperial court. The assembly, inflamed with this intelligence, rashly and precipitately impeached M. de Lessart for criminal concealment and disobedience. He was succeeded by M. Dumourier.

On the first of March (1792) died suddenly of a malignant fever, the emperor Leopold II. He was succeeded by his son Francis II. under the title of king of Hungary; but he was after a short interval elected emperor of the Romans. This event made not the least change in the system of Austrian policy. Scarcely was the new monarch seated on his throne, when he communicated to the court of Berlin his determination strictly and literally to adhere to the terms of the treaty of Pilnitz. The king of France at this period, in conformity to his weak and wavering policy, made another effort to regain the ground he had lost, by nominating March 23, after various unpopular dismissions



dismissals and appointments, M. Roland to the interior department, M. Claviere to that of finance, and soon after M. Servan to be minister of war—men who possessed the entire esteem and confidence of the nation.

The categorical answer of the court of Vienna at length arrived, insisting, “ 1. on the restitution of the feudal rights of the German princes in Lorraine and Alsace; 2. the restoration of Avignon to the Pope; and 3. upon adequate satisfaction that the neighbouring powers shall have no reason for the apprehension which arose from the present weakness of the internal government of France.” The first two of these propositions being inadmissible, and the last unintelligible, war was on the 20th of April declared against the king of Hungary.

At this crisis a very remarkable letter was written in confidence by the king of France to the king of England, doubtless by advice of his present popular ministers, expressing in the most flattering terms his obligations to his Britannic majesty for his impartial conduct, and making the most eager advances to the formation of a treaty of amity and alliance. “ Between our two countries, says the French monarch, new connections ought to take place. I think I see the remains of that rivalry which has done so much mischief to both, daily wearing away. It becomes two kings who have distinguished their reigns by a constant desire to promote the happiness of their people, to connect themselves by such ties as will appear to be durable in proportion as the two nations shall have clearer views of their own interests. I consider the success of the alliance, in which I wish you to concur with as much zeal as I do, as of the highest importance. I consider it as necessary to the stability of the respective constitutions, and the internal tranquillity of our two kingdoms; and I will add, that our union ought to COMMAND PEACE TO EUROPE.”

It was indeed evident that at this period England might have commanded peace upon her own terms. Never did this country appear in a higher and more exalted point of view than at this moment; but from that fatality which has governed almost invariably the counsels of the present reign, she suffered the glorious golden opportunity to pass by unnoticed and unimproved. A distant and evasive answer was returned; England, it was affirmed, could not mediate without the assent and approbation of both the parties—not recollecting certainly the late armed mediation in favor of the Ottoman porte. And the patriots of France saw clearly from this moment, that the utmost they had to expect from the policy of the English court was a cold and suspicious neutrality.

On the commencement of hostilities M. Rochambeau was constituted commander in chief of the French armies, a separate command being conferred on M. de Fayette. The war began with an unsuccessful attack upon the cities of Tournay and Mons. M. Rochambeau, conceiving disgust at the conduct of the war minister, resigned his command to M. Luckner, a veteran officer, by birth a foreigner, and who had acquired great reputation in the German war of 1756—being then in the service of Hanover. The new general did not disappoint the expectations of the public. On the 18th of June the important town of Courtray surrendered to the arms of France, and the example of Courtray was soon followed by Menin, Ypres, and St. Ghislain; but on a sudden, to the astonishment of the world, these conquests were evacuated, and the French armies retreated to their former stations in France. Marshal Luckner subsequently declared, that in this business he acted in strict conformity to the positive orders received from the king, who by this time had again adopted violent and dangerous counsels. Into this perpetual fluctuation of system there enters without doubt at least as much of imbecility as of treachery. Having no clear discernment of  
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his own interest, and placing no reliance upon his own judgment, he was willing in a situation of unparalleled difficulty to make trial of any plan that was recommended to him from any quarter. It was truly said of him, "*La dernière venue avoit presque toujours raison avec lui.*" At the present crisis his characteristic weakness seemed to approach the limits of absolute insatiation.

On the 6th of June a decree passed the assembly, on the suggestion of the military committee, for forming a camp of twenty thousand men in the vicinity of Paris. To this the king refused his sanction. The decree against the refractory clergy, which with some variations had a second time passed the assembly, was also rendered ineffectual by the royal veto; and to crown all, the king on the 12th of June announced in person to the assembly the dismissal of the popular ministers Roland, Servan, and Claviere: and in a short time M. Dumourier also resigned his office. Previous to this event M. Roland wrote that celebrated letter to the king, which, had it not been written otherwise in the rolls of fate or providence, might have saved the monarch and the monarchy. "The fermentation is extreme, says this firm and virtuous patriot, in the various parts of the empire; it will burst upon us with a DREADFUL EXPLOSION, unless it be calmed by a well-founded confidence in your majesty's intentions: but this confidence will not be established by mere promises and protestations—it can rest upon facts only. The French nation know their constitution can sustain itself; that government will have all necessary aid whenever your majesty, wishing well to the constitution, shall support the legislative body by causing their decrees to be executed, and remove every pretext for popular dissatisfaction, and every hope of the malcontents. The revolution is established in the public mind; it will be completed by the effusion of blood, if wisdom do not guard against evils which can YET be prevented. If force were resorted to, all France would rise

with indignation ; and, distracted by the horrors of a civil war, she would display that gloomy energy, the parent of virtues and of crimes, ever fatal to those who provoke it." After this fatal step, a succession of ministers, or phantoms of ministers, passed rapidly over the stage ; the general state of things verged towards anarchy, the pillars of the state seemed to bow, and the fabric of government tottered to its fall.

On the 20th of June an immense crowd assembled in the gardens of the Tuilleries, and, the gates of the palace being thrown open, the populace entered into the apartment of the king. One of their leaders, more daring than the rest, producing a red cap, the symbol of liberty, desired the king to put it on. He complied ; and, in answer to the incessant and clamorous demands of the mob, he repeatedly declared, " that it was his firm intention to preserve the constitution inviolate." Though the insults which the unfortunate monarch was compelled to endure were grievous, no further injury was sustained, and at the approach of night the people were persuaded to disperse. The king made a formal complaint of this outrage to the assembly ; but, in the present situation of things, they could as easily calm the storms of the ocean as the tumults of the people.

At this crisis M. de Fayette, quitted his army without leave or propriety, presented himself unexpectedly at the bar of the assembly, beseeching, or rather demanding, of them " to save their country from ruin, by dissolving the factious clubs, and inflicting exemplary punishment on the late disturbers of the public peace." By this most imprudent and unwarrantable step that general entirely lost the confidence of the nation, and incurred for this dangerous and unconstitutional interference the severe censure of the assembly ; and he returned in a short time full of resentment and chagrin to his post in the army.

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On the 1st of July it was proclaimed by the assembly, "that the country was in danger." "Your constitution, citizens, say they, restores the principles of eternal justice; a league of kings is formed to destroy it—their battalions are advancing." The political horizon in France exhibited the deepest gloom. On the 14th of July the third anniversary of the revolution was celebrated, but instead of the animating shout of *vive le roi!* nothing was heard but the clamorous vociferations of *vivent les jacobins!* *A bas le veto!*

It was in a short time after this ceremony announced, that the combined armies of Austria and Prussia had entered France under the duke of Brunswick, who had on the 25th of July issued a proclamation which seemed purposely calculated to complete the ruin of the king. In this famous manifesto the most dreadful vengeance is denounced against the French nation. Such of them as are found in arms against the troops of the allied powers, are threatened to be punished as REBELS to their king, and destroyers of the public tranquillity; and the city of Paris, in case the king, queen, and the royal family are not immediately *set at liberty*, is to be delivered up to the horrors of military execution.

This filled up the measure of the popular fury. It was not doubted but the king had authorized the use thus made of his name, and matters were almost immediately brought to a crisis. On the 3d of August M. Petion at the head of the sections of Paris appeared at the bar of the national assembly, to demand the DECHÉANCE of the king. A petition of the same tenor was presented by a countless multitude on the 6th, and the assembly had appointed the 10th of August to decide upon this grand question; but the discussion was dreadfully anticipated. Early on the morning of the 10th the palace of the Tuilleries was attacked by the Parisian populace; and being resolutely defend-

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ed by the Swiss guards, a most bloody conflict took place, which terminated in the total defeat and destruction of the guards, and the complete triumph of the Parisians. The king at the commencement of the engagement had—most certainly in the spirit of Henry IV.—made his retreat across the gardens of the Tuilleries, with the queen, to the hall of the assembly, who continued their sitting in the midst of this unexampled scene of terror and confusion, and the incessant noise of musquetry and cannon. All freedom of deliberation was now at an end. A decree passed without debate, declaring the executive power suspended, and summoning a national convention to meet on the 20th of September. The king and queen meanwhile were committed close prisoners to the temple. A most spirited justificatory declaration of the measure of suspension was published by the assembly, concluding with these words: “We have discharged our duty in seizing with courage on the only means of preserving liberty that occurred to our consideration; we shall be spared remorse at least, nor shall we have to reproach ourselves with having seen a means of saving our country and not having embraced it.”

On the following day a new provisional executive council was appointed, consisting of the popular ministers Roland, Servan, and Claviere, dismissed by the king; to whom was added M. Le Brun, as minister of foreign affairs. M. Luckner, M. Dumourier now acting in the capacity of general in the army, and the other commanders, submitted with readiness to the authority of the assembly. M. Fayette alone attempted resistance; but finding himself wholly unsupported by his troops, he was obliged to make a precipitate escape. Being intercepted in his flight, and delivered up to the Prussians, he was committed close prisoner to the fortress of Spandau, where he has been treated with a severity not to be wholly ascribed to the part  
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taken by him in the *late* revolution. The combined armies of Austria and Prussia in the mean time made a rapid and alarming progress. The town of Longwy surrendered on the 21st of August, and in a few days afterwards that of Verdun; yet even in these circumstances the national assembly had the magnanimity to declare war against the king of Sardinia, who had given repeated and flagrant proofs of his hostile disposition towards France.

Since the deposition of the king the prisons had been filled with persons accused or suspected of disaffection to the existing government; and a sort of phrensy seizing the populace on the expected approach of the duke, the prisons were forced open on the night of the 2d of September, and a most horrid and indiscriminate massacre of the prisoners took place. It is said that, application being made on this occasion to M. Danton, minister of justice, to interpose his authority in order to put a stop to these detestable enormities, he replied, "When the people have done their part I will perform mine."

On the 20th of September the national convention met at Paris, and a decree immediately passed by acclamation for the eternal abolition of royalty in France. Such had been the insidious negligence of the court, that the country was wholly unprepared for its defence; and M. Dumourier, to whom the destiny of France was now entrusted, could scarcely oppose thirty thousand men to the army of the duke of Brunswic, consisting of eighty thousand. With this small force he determined to make his stand at the forest of Argonne, the passes of which after repeated attempts the duke found himself unable to force. The French army receiving continual reinforcements, and the Prussians suffering under the united evils of sickness and famine, he was compelled to the humiliating necessity of commencing his retreat on the 1st of October, and by the 18th the Austrian and Prussian armies had completely evacuated

cuated France\*. By this time the French arms were triumphant in every quarter. General Montefquieu entering Savoy on the 20th of September, was received with joyful acclamation at Chamberri the capital, and the whole country submitted almost without resistance. On the other side, the fortrefs of Montalban and the entire county of Nice were conquered by general Anselm. On the banks of the Rhine general Custine distinguished himself by the most brilliant successes—reducing successively the cities of Worms, Spire, Mentz, and Frankfort.

Early in November general Dumourier entered the Austrian Netherlands; and on the 5th of November, a day sacred to liberty, attacking the Austrian entrenchments at Jemappe near Mons, he gained a most complete and signal victory, the consequences of which were decisive as to the fate of the Netherlands. Mons instantly surrendered. Tournay, Ostend, Ghent, and Antwerp soon followed; and on the 14th the French general made his triumphal entry into Brussels. And before the end of the year, the whole of the Austrian low countries, Luxembourg only excepted, together with the city and territory of Leige, were subjected by the victorious arms of France. Such were

\* The noble one of Buchanan on the retreat of the emperor Charles V. from Metz, addressed to Henry II. king of France, is admirably applicable to the retreat of Brunswic, and the triumph of Dumourier.

" Tu bellicosæ dux bone Galliæ  
Sperare promptam cuncta superbiam  
Compescuisti: tu dedisti  
Indomito laqueos furori.

Quis vultus illi? qui dolor intimis  
Arsit medullis? Spiritus impotens  
Cum claustra spectaret Mosellæ  
Et juvenum intrepidam corronam.

Sic unda rupes sævit in obvias;  
Clausus caminis ignis inæstuat:  
Hyrcana sic tigris æ ruento  
Dente suas furit in catenas."



were the astonishing effects of that glorious enthusiasm, which can only be inspired by the love of FREEDOM\*!

In the midst of the exultation occasioned by this unexampled series of triumphs, a decree was passed by acclamation in the assembly November 19, 1792, in the following terms:—"The national convention declare, in the name of the French nation, that they will grant fraternity and assistance to all those people who wish to procure liberty. And they charge the executive power to send orders to the generals to give assistance to such people; and to defend citizens who have suffered and are now suffering in the cause of liberty."

This famous decree, which deserved to be considered in no other light than as a magnificent and empty vaunt, was productive of very strange and serious consequences. Two other decrees of the assembly also demand a specific notice: the one erecting the Duchy of Savoy into an 84th department of the French republic, contrary to a fundamental article of the constitution, by which she renounced all foreign conquests: the other, on the capture of Antwerp, declaratory of the freedom of navigation on the river Scheldt.

Before

\* Long had the giant-form on Gallia's plains  
 Inglorious slept, unconscious of his chains;  
 Round his large limbs were wound a thousand strings,  
 By the weak hands of confessors and kings;  
 O'er his closed eyes a triple veil was bound,  
 And steely rivets locked him to the ground:  
 While stern bastille with iron cage inthralls  
 His folded limbs, and hems in marble walls.  
 —Touch'd by the patriot flame, he rent amaz'd  
 The flimsy bonds, and round and round him gaz'd;  
 Starts up from earth, above the admiring throng  
 Lifts his colossal form, and towers along:  
 High o'er his foes his hundred arms he rears,  
 Ploughshares his swords, and pruning-hooks his spears;  
 Calls to the good and brave with voice that rolls  
 Like Heaven's own thunder round the echoing poles;  
 Gives to the winds his banner broad unfurl'd,  
 And gathers in its shade the living world.

DARWIN'S BOTANIC GARDEN.

Before we revert to the affairs of Great Britain, it may be proper transiently to notice the situation of the different powers of Europe not actually engaged in the *crusade* against France.

Great pains had been taken by the courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg to engage the republic of Poland in the last war against Turkey; and the king of Poland had been personally present at the memorable interview of Cherson. But the servile dependency on Russia, in which the republic had been held since the æra of the accession of Stanislaus, was odious to the Poles; and a new interest—that of PRUSSIA—had lately gained the ascendancy in the diet, under the favorable auspices of which Poland seemed for a time to recover some share of importance in the European scale of power. The proposition of war was rejected; and a treaty of amity and defensive alliance concluded with Prussia February 1790. In the diet held at Warsaw May 1791, a new constitutional code was announced and promulgated, to the great joy of the nation, deeply sensible of the evils resulting from her former inefficient and defective form of government. By the new *formula* the crown of Poland was declared to be hereditary, and the executive power vested solely in the monarch. The privileges of the aristocracy were circumscribed within narrower limits, and the blessings of liberty in some degree extended to the mass of the people. The king of Prussia, by his ambassador at Warsaw, formally congratulated the king and the republic of Poland on this happy event. But soon the scene totally changed. The empress of Russia declared her entire disapprobation of the late revolution, and, as the guarantee of the former constitution, ordered an army of one hundred thousand men to enter the territories of the republic.

Finding no force sufficient to stop, or scarcely to impede their progress, the Russian generals proceeded to Warsaw; and the whole country being now in their hands, the

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new constitution was forcibly and totally annulled at the ensuing diet of Grodno. The king of Prussia, far from interposing in their behalf, with unexampled and unblushing perfidy embraced eagerly the opportunity of profiting by their distress, and concluded with the empress a second partition treaty, by which the provinces of Volhinia, Podolia, and the Ukraine, with the half of Lithuania which remained to Poland on the former division, were assigned to Russia, and nearly the whole of Great Poland, with the cities of Dantzick and Thorn, were allotted to the king of Prussia, from whom this new acquisition of territory received the appellation of South Prussia. The manifesto of the court of Berlin published on this occasion, and in vindication of these proceedings, declared with effrontery unparalleled, "that the Poles, misled by designing men, had established a government subversive of all order in society, and destructive of all happiness amongst individuals." All these outrages and usurpations the diet of Grodno, reduced to the lowest state of national humiliation, was ultimately compelled to ratify.

The affairs of Sweden, since the termination of the war with Russia, remained in a perplexed and critical situation. The king of Sweden summoned, in the beginning of 1792, a diet to meet at Gessle, a solitary and obscure place on the borders of the Bothnic Gulf, 70 miles from Stockholm. During the sitting of the diet the town was filled with troops. Notwithstanding these precautions, the demands and expectations of the king were by no means answered; and the diet was finally dissolved in anger. On his return to Stockholm he was assassinated at a masquerade by an officer of the name of Engerstrom, actuated by the enthusiasm of public and the rancor of personal revenge.

He was succeeded by his son Gustavus IV. a youth of fourteen years of age: and the regency was vested in the hands of the duke of Sundermania, brother to the late king,

king, who has conducted himself in his high office with singular prudence and propriety. It was generally understood that Gustavus III. had acceded to the CONSPIRACY of SOVEREIGNS against France, and had even proposed to take the command of the combined armies in person; but the regent maintained a strict and scrupulous neutrality. The same wise plan was also steadily pursued by Denmark, under the excellent and admirable administration of count Bernstorff. The Italian and Helvetic republic, adopted the same safe and salutary system. Spain alone appeared wavering and indecisive, agitated by the alternate fluctuations of policy and passion.

In consequence of the transactions of the 10th of August, and the virtual deposition of the French monarch, Lord Gower, the English ambassador at Paris, received orders from the court of London to quit the kingdom, on the slight and frivolous pretext, that, the functions of royalty being suspended, his mission was at an end. This recall was considered by the leading men in France, as a certain and very ominous indication of the enmity of the British court: nevertheless, as a demonstration of their moderation, and solicitude for peace, M. Chauvelin the French ambassador still remained in London, though from this period unacknowledged in any public or authorized capacity. The recall of the English ambassador at this critical moment, on the ground stated by the English court, seemed to imply that appointments of this nature are a mere matter of form and compliment between sovereigns: but if ambassadors are considered in a higher and juster light, as the necessary means of intercourse between nation and nation, never could the recall of an ambassador take place at a period when his presence and services were more indispensable.

On the success of the French arms in Flanders, the court of London gave a still farther proof of their inimical disposition, by making an eager, officious, and unsolicited

cited offer of assistance to the states general in case of need. But their high mightinesses declared themselves under no apprehension of attack. Also, in direct violation of the commercial treaty, an exclusive embargo was laid on vessels freighted with corn for France.

The causes of the deposition of the French monarch, and the nature of the provocations and injuries which preceded and produced that event, not being sufficiently understood in England, it made an impression very unfavorable upon the minds of the generality of the people, already biassed and perverted by the inflammatory declamations of Mr. Burke and his partisans. And the horrid massacres of September completely alienated their minds from the revolution, although these detestable enormities could not in any rational sense be said to originate in the revolution, but merely and solely in the opposition made to its establishment. The nation was on a sudden struck with terror at the idea of any political innovation of any kind; and the very name of REFORM became the subject of violent and indiscriminate reprobation.

Under the impression of this prevailing prepossession, an association openly countenanced by government was formed in London for the protection of liberty and property against republicans and levellers; and an innumerable multitude of pamphlets, in the popular form of letters, dialogues and narratives, were circulated by this means throughout the kingdom, inculcating an unreserved submission to government, on the old exploded principles of toryism and high churchism. In one of the most notorious of these tracts it was urged in favor of monarchy, "that the king is in scripture called the LORD'S ANOINTED; but who, say these profound politicians, ever heard of an ANOINTED REPUBLIC?"

The rage of associating spread rapidly through the kingdom; and in every county, and almost every town, resolutions were subscribed strongly expressive of loyalty and attachment

attachment to the king and constitution, and abhorrence of all levelling and republican doctrines. The populace entering with violence into these sentiments, and their passions being by the methods now put in practice dangerously excited, the cry of CHURCH and KING was vociferated with tremendous clamors from the Tamar to the Tweed; from the Cliffs of Dover to the hills of Cheviot.

Previous to this extraordinary display of loyalty, it had been not unusual for the violent zealots of republicanism in England to transmit addresses to the convention, declaratory in high-flown terms of their applause and admiration. The most remarkable of these, entitled "an address from several patriotic societies in England", was presented November 7, at the bar of the convention, containing, in addition to the accustomed complimentary expressions, the most indecent and indefensible reflections upon the government and constitution of their own country. "Whilst foreign plunderers ravage your territories (say these addressers), an *oppressed part of mankind*, forgetting their own evils, are sensible only of yours, and address their fervent prayers to the GOD of the universe that he may be favorable to your cause, with *which theirs is so intimately connected*.—Degraded by an oppressive system of inquisition, the insensible but continual encroachments of which quickly deprived this nation of its boasted liberty, and reduced it almost to that abject state of slavery from which you have so gloriously emancipated yourselves—FIVE THOUSAND English citizens, fired with indignation, have the courage to step forward to rescue their country from that opprobrium which has been thrown on it by the base conduct of those who are invested with power.—We see with concern that the elector of Hanover unites his troops to those of traitors and robbers: but the king of England will do well to remember that England is not Hanover. *Should he forget this, we will not forget it.*" The president of the convention, in his answer

swer to this daring and insolent address, had the extreme indiscretion to use expressions full of respect and complacency. "The sentiments of five thousand Britons", said he "devoted openly to the cause of mankind, exist *without doubt* in the hearts of all the freemen in England." And what is still more surprising, copies of the address were ordered to be sent to all the armies and departments of the republic.

The true key to this most impolitic, rash, and insulting conduct of the convention, so far as the acts of a democratic assembly, too oft proceeding from the impulse of the moment, can be traced to system, is, that in consequence of the number of ostentatious, but really insignificant addresses presented at their bar, they were most egregiously deceived with respect to the sentiments of the people of England at this period; and they fancied that, by gratifying their resentment against the court, they should at the same time recommend themselves to the nation at large, with whom it is certain that they ardently wished to cultivate a good understanding\*.

The

\* During the whole of our journey, says an intelligent traveller (December 1792), we remarked that the apprehension of a war with England was peculiarly painful to the French. Though flushed with their late successes, and confident against a world in arms, it was evident there was nothing they dreaded more than such an event; not merely on account of the mischief that might ensue, but because it would force them to regard as enemies the only nation in Europe they considered as their friends.—All along the road they anxiously asked us what we thought would be the consequence of the armament in England? We frankly told them we presumed it would be war; and generally observed a moment of silence and dejection follow the delivery of our opinion. The imminence of hostilities, however, in no degree diminished the respect they shewed us as Englishmen: and not only we did not meet with any thing like an insult in the whole of our tour, but, on the contrary, we experienced every where particular kindness and attention. They seemed eager to court our opinion; and frequently begged us not to ascribe to a whole nation the faults of individuals, and not to charge their government with disorders its present state of vacillation rendered it incompetent to repress—I confess I should never have suspected that I was travelling among a nation of savages, madmen, and assassins—I should rather have wished with SHAKESPEARE,

————— That these contending kingdoms,  
England and France, whose very shores look pale  
With envy of each other's happiness,  
May lose their hatred.

*Vide* "Tour through the Theatre of War 1792."

The decree of the 19th of November filled up the measure of their iniquity in the view of the court of London; and in combination with the obnoxious addresses, it was regarded as little less than an act of open aggression. Certainly the English government had just cause of resentment, and an undoubted right to adequate reparation. Unhappily the court of London, inflamed with indignation, sought not reparation merely, but revenge. Her measures being now determined on, a royal proclamation was issued December 1, 1792, announcing the alarming intelligence, "that notwithstanding the late proclamation of the 21st of May, the utmost industry was still employed by evil-disposed persons within the kingdom, acting in concert with persons in foreign parts, with a view to subvert the laws and constitution; and that a spirit of tumult and disorder, *thereby excited*, had lately shewn itself in acts of riot and INSURRECTION—and that, these causes moving him thereto, his majesty had resolved forthwith to embody part of the militia of the kingdom."

On the same day another proclamation was issued for convening the parliament (which stood prorogued to the 3d of January 1793) on the 13th. of December; the law requiring, that if the militia be drawn out during the recess of parliament, and this it can only be in case of invasion or actual *insurrection*, parliament shall be assembled within the space of fourteen days.

The public alarm caused by these proceedings was inexpressible. Every one was convinced of the existence of a PLOT, which was so much the more terrible, from its being invisible and incomprehensible. The minister did not disdain to heighten the general consternation by the palpable artifices of marching troops to the metropolis, of doubling the guard at the bank, and of repairing the fortifications of the tower.

On the meeting of parliament on the day appointed, the expressions of the first proclamation were repeated in

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his majesty's speech; towards the conclusion of which the real views of the court became sufficiently manifest. "I have, said his majesty, carefully observed a strict neutrality in the present war on the continent, and have uniformly abstained from any interference with respect to the internal government of France; but it is impossible for me to see without the most serious uneasiness the strong and increasing indications which have appeared there, of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, as well as to adopt towards my allies the states general measures which were neither conformable to the law of nations nor to the positive stipulations of existing treaties. Under these circumstances his majesty thought it right to have recourse to those means of prevention and internal defence with which he was intrusted by law, and to make some augmentation of his naval and military force."

On moving the address in answer to the speech, a memorable debate arose. Never did the strength and superiority of Mr. Fox's genius appear perhaps so conspicuous as in this moment of national infatuation. "This," said Mr. Fox, "is the most momentous crisis, not only that I have ever known, but that I have ever read of in the history of this country—a crisis not merely interesting to ourselves, but to all nations; and on the conduct of parliament depends the fate of the British constitution—perhaps the future happiness of mankind. His majesty's speech contains a variety of assertions of the most extraordinary nature. We are told there exists at this moment an insurrection in this kingdom.—AN INSURRECTION!—where is it? where has it reared its head? Although this insurrection has existed fourteen days, ministers have given us no light whatever, no clue, no information where to find it. There have been, as I understand, and as every one must have heard, some slight riots in different parts;

but I ask, Were the various pretexts of these different tumults false, and used only to cover an attempt to destroy our happy constitution? I have heard of a tumult at Shields, of another at Leith, of something of the same nature at Yarmouth and Dundee. But were the sailors who demanded an increase of their wages actuated by a design of overthrowing the constitution? Is there a man in England who is credulous enough to believe it?—The address now moved says modestly, ‘We are sorry to hear there is an insurrection.’ Of the tumults in the seaports we had some previous knowledge, but the insurrection we learn from his majesty’s speech. It has been alledged as a proof of disaffection; that the countenances of many wore the face of joy when the intelligence arrived of the duke of Brunswic’s retreat. What! is it a sufficient demonstration of republicanism, that men should rejoice in the discomfiture of the armies of despotism combating against liberty? Could any man who loves the constitution of this country with success to the duke of Brunswic, after reading a manifesto which violated every principle of justice, humanity, freedom, and true government?—Who will dare to defend that system of tyranny and coercion, which insists that Englishmen shall not indulge any genuine feelings of their own—which tells them that they must not think but by permission—that they must rejoice and grieve as it suits the caprice or the pleasure of the ministers? Are we to arraign a man for his secret and supposed designs, and arrogate to ourselves at once the province and the power of the deity?—What innocence can be safe from this more than inquisitorial oppression?—Doubtless there are speculative persons in this country who disapprove of the system of our government: and there must be such men as long as the land is free, for it is of the very essence of freedom for men to differ upon speculative points. From the instant that opinion shall be held dependent upon

on the will of the minister or the magistrate, I date the extinction of our liberties as a people."

In passing to that part of the king's speech which related to France, Mr. Fox asserted "that there never was a period when this country had so much reason to wish for peace. Never was there a period less favorable to a system of hostility. How frequently have wars been prevented by negotiation! Why then disdain to negotiate now?—Because we had no minister at Paris. And why have we no minister?—Because France is a republic. For this punctilio then it is that the blood and treasure of the kingdom are to be expended!—As to the free navigation of the Scheldt, I will not believe that a war can in reality be undertaken for an object so trivial, or that Holland itself would desire or approve it. What was the conduct of France under her former depraved government, when the emperor menaced the opening of the Scheldt in 1786? Was war declared in order to prevent it? No? they opened a negotiation, and carried the point by amicable interposition. Is not the ultimate object of republicans and levellers aided by plunging the nation in a war without due and previous enquiry? I conjure parliament to avoid involving the people in so dreadful a calamity, without coolly reflecting on its necessity."

Mr. Fox concluded with moving an amendment, simply pledging the house "that enquiry should be made into the facts stated in his majesty's speech." After a debate of many hours, the house divided for the amendment 50, against it 290!

In the house of lords the address was carried without a division; but not without a powerful opposition from the duke of Norfolk, and the lords Lansdowne, Rawdon, and Stanhope.

In consequence of the late alarms, the opposition, or whig party, had, as it now appeared, suffered a great and melancholy defection. At the head of the seceders in the

upper house, were the prince of Wales, the duke of Portland, and lords Fitzwilliam, Spencer, and LOUGHBOROUGH, who on the *resignation* of lords Thurlow at this period was advanced to the chancellorship; and in the lower house, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr. Anstruther, &c. who acquired by this means the popular appellation of ALARMISTS. On the bringing up the report, on the succeeding day, the debate was resumed with fresh vehemence. Mr. Fox most severely censured the ministers for not having interposed the mediation of Great Britain, in order to preserve the peace of Europe. Had we protested against the project concerted at Pilnitz, and armed to prevent the execution of it, England must have acquired such an ascendancy in the councils of France as would have completely obviated all the subsequent causes of dissatisfaction. "If," said Mr. Fox, "there exists a discontented or disaffected party in the kingdom, what can so much add to their numbers, or their influence, as a war, which, by increasing the public burdens till they become intolerable, will give proportionable weight to their complaints? He wished therefore that war should be avoided, if possible—that negotiation should precede hostility. He was fully aware of the arrogant notions of ministers, who perhaps would not condescend to receive a minister from the French republic. If this were the case, let ministers fairly avow it—that the people of England might know how far the essential interests of the nation were sacrificed to a *punctilio*. Gentlemen should recollect that it was once fashionable to talk of 'a vagrant congress,' of 'one Hancock' and 'one Adams' and 'their crew.' But surely the folly of this language had been sufficiently proved." He then moved an amendment, "beseeching his majesty to employ every means of honourable negotiation, for the purpose of preventing a war with France." The motion was opposed by Mr. Burke in a frantic speech, in which he affirmed, "that to send an ambassador to France would

### K. GEORGE III.

would be the prelude to the murder of our sovereign." Mr. Pitt was at this time not a member of the house, having vacated his seat by the acceptance of the lucrative sinecure of the cinque ports, void by the death of the earl of Guildford, once so famous under the title of lord North.

In the absence of the minister, Mr. secretary Dundas entered into a long and elaborate vindication of the measures of administration; and he concluded with a confident prediction, that "*if we were forced into a war, it must prove successful and glorious.*" The amendment was negatived without a division.

Not discouraged at the ill success of these attempts, Mr. Fox on the 15th of December moved, at the close of a speech which only served to demonstrate how incompetent are the utmost efforts of human wisdom to work conviction in minds distempered by prejudice and passion, "that a minister be sent to Paris to treat with those persons who exercise provisionally the executive government of France. "This," he said, "implied neither approbation nor disapprobation of the conduct of the existing French government. It was the policy and the practice of every nation to treat with the existing government of every other nation with which it had relative interests without enquiring how that government was constituted, or by what means it acquired possession of power. Was the existing government of Morocco more respectable than that of France? Yet we had more than once sent embassies thither, to men reeking from the blood through which they had waded to their thrones. We had ministers at the German courts, at the time of the infamous partition of Poland. We had a minister at Versailles when Corsica was bought and enslaved. But in none of these instances was any sanction given directly or indirectly by Great Britain to these nefarious transactions."

Mr. Francis, in a very excellent speech, remonstrated and protested against the manner in which the debate had  
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been conducted on the part of the ministerialists. "How," said he, "has this awful question been agitated? By appeals to our understanding? No—by exciting our passions, by agitating our feelings, by presenting perpetually to our imagination scenes of horror. Thus do the house in fact deprive themselves of all capacity to debate—of all power to judge. They listen with rapture to invectives, and echo them back in shouts and clamors: Is this a British house of commons? or am I suddenly transplanted by some enchantment into that convention against which the perpetual theme of reproach is, that they deliberate in passion, and resolve by acclamation?"

In answer to the absurd and puerile objection, that, if we agreed to a negotiation, we should not know with whom to negotiate, Mr. Whitbread asked with energetic animation, "if we knew with whom we were going to make war? If there was no difficulty in deciding upon that point, how could we pretend to be at a loss to know with whom we were to make peace? Doubtless with that assembly, truly described by his majesty as exercising the powers of government in France."

Mr. Courtenay animadverted with poignant severity upon the rhapsodical extravagancies which had fallen from Mr. Burke; and he read to the house a passage from the famous pamphlet published by him, which he said he considered as the prelude to the duke of Brunswick's disgraceful manifesto. Mr. Courtenay said, that "Mr. Burke was the dupe of his imagination. His imagination was a magic lanthorn, presenting a rapid and exhaustless succession of phantasms. There were chivalry—the duke of Brunswick—Petion faction—national convention—king of Armenia—senate of Rome—Marat—assassinations—Corinthian capitals—Tom Paine—and many other things, making a complete raree-show, for the entertainment of the admirers of that gentleman. Mr. Courtenay acknowledged that he had never felt so much pleasure, as when the Prus-

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sians, who had entered France not as soldiers but as ruffians, had been driven back in shame and confusion. He had participated in the triumph when M. Dumourier made his *joyeuse entrée* into Brabant."

Mr. Windham had laid it down as an axiom of policy, "that to be *justified* in negotiating with France, it should be a matter of necessity, not of choice."

"Happy, dignified opportunity to treat!" exclaimed Mr. Sheridan, "when necessity, a necessity arising from defeat and discomfiture, from shame and disgrace, shall compel us to negotiate on terms which would leave us completely at their mercy! How consolatory, to be able to boast that we are at the same time *justified* and *UNDONE*! —But we are told," continued Mr. Sheridan, "that to treat with France would give offence to the allied powers, with whom we are eventually to co-operate. Are we then prepared to make a common cause on the principles and for the purposes for which those despots have associated? Are the freemen of England ready to subscribe to the manifesto of the duke of Brunswic? that detestable outrage on the rights and feelings of human nature! that impotent and wretched tissue of pride, folly and cruelty, which had steelled the heart and maddened the brain of all France! The question is not merely, whether we should go to war or not? but on what principle should it be conducted, and to what end directed? To restore the antient despotism of France? Impossible! Disputes and causes of complaint existing, how were they to be terminated, but by some sort of negotiation? But we were told, that the dignity of the nation forbade a public and avowed communication with the present ruling powers in France. Was the dignity of the nation better consulted by the mean subterfuge of an indirect and underhand intercourse? Was it sacrificed by a magnanimous frankness, and sustained only by dark and insidious disguise? Far from recalling the ambassador of England from Paris at the late perilous crisis, a *statesman-like administration* would have regarded the post  
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of minister of Paris, as the situation which demanded the first and ablest talents of the country. It was a situation which afforded scope and interest for the noblest mind that ever warmed a human bosom. The French had been uniformly partial, and even prejudiced, in favor of the English. What manly sense, and generous feeling, and above all, what fair truth and plain dealing might have effected, it was difficult to calculate. But the policy which discarded these, and which substituted in their stead a **HOL-LOW NEUTRALITY**, was an error fatal in its consequences, and for ever to be lamented." The motion was in the end negatived without a division.

Mr. Grey, Mr. Erskine, and Mr. Adam distinguished themselves in the course of these debates by very able and eloquent speeches on the part of the opposition. And the desertion of their *friends*, far from dispiriting the faithful few who remained, seemed to animate them to still higher and more ardent exertions of patriotic zeal. The popular odium incurred by the leaders of opposition, and in particular by Mr. Fox, in consequence of their generous endeavours to rescue their country from the gulf of ruin into which it was with such blind and rash precipitancy about to plunge, will appear to posterity scarcely credible. Neither professing a contempt for the public judgment, nor on the other hand yielding for a moment to the tide of popular opinion, Mr. Fox published at this period a very animated and dignified address to his constituents, the electors of Westminster, stating, with admirable force and perspicuity of argument, his reasons for his late parliamentary conduct. The conclusion of this justly celebrated address is peculiarly striking. "Let us not," says he "attempt to deceive ourselves. Whatever possibility, or even probability there may be of a counter-revolution from internal agitation and discord, the means of producing such an event by external force can be no other than the conquest of France.—The CONQUEST of FRANCE!

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O calumniated crusaders, how rational and moderate were your objects ! O much injured Louis XIV. upon what slight grounds have you been accused of restless and immoderate ambition ! O tame and feeble Cervantes, with what a timid pencil and faint colors have you painted the portrait of a disordered imagination !”

Although the determination of the English court was from the first sufficiently manifest, the government of France left no means unessayed to accomplish an accommodation.

On the 17th of December a memorial was presented by M. Chauvelin to lord Grenville, in which he informs his lordship, that the executive council of the French republic, thinking it a duty which they owe to the French nation, not to leave it in the state of suspense into which it has been thrown by the late measures of the British government, have authorized him to demand with openness, whether France ought to consider England as a neutral or hostile power ; at the same time being solicitous, that not the smallest doubt should exist respecting the disposition of France towards England, and of its desire to remain in peace. In allusion to the decree of the 19th of November, M. Chauvelin says, “ that the French nation absolutely reject the idea of that false interpretation, by which it might be supposed that the French republic should favor insurrections, or excite disturbance in any neutral or friendly country whatever. In particular, they declare in the most solemn manner, that France will not attack Holland so long as that power adheres to the principles of her neutrality. As to the navigation of the Scheldt, M. Chauvelin affirms it to be a question of too little importance to be made the sole cause of a war ; and that it could only be used as a pretext for a premeditated aggression. On this fatal supposition, he says, the French nation will accept war : but such a war would be the war not of the British nation, but of the British ministry, against  
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the French republic; and of this he conjures them well to consider the TERRIBLE RESPONSIBILITY." To this communication lord Grenville returned a most arrogant and provoking answer. His lordship acknowledged the receipt of a *note* from M. Chauvelin, *styling himself* minister plenipotentiary of France. He reminds him that the king, since the unhappy events of the 10th of August, had suspended all *official* communication with France: and informs him, that he cannot be treated with in the quality and under the form stated in his *note*. Nevertheless, "under a form neither regular nor official," his lordship condescends to reply—but in a mode which could only tend to inflame the differences subsisting between the two nations; and which, far from accepting the concessions and explanations made by France, sought only to discover new pretences of cavil and quarrel. In a tone of the most decided and lofty superiority, his lordship says, "if France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and to confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights." The relinquishment of her recent conquests being thus haughtily demanded of France as a preliminary of peace, it might well be supposed that negotiation was at an end. But the government of France, in the midst of their triumphs, discovered a degree of temper and moderation in their intercourse with England as surprising as it was laudable. In answer to the letter of Lord Grenville, a memorial was transmitted from M. Le Brun, minister of foreign affairs, in the name of the executive council, dated January 4, 1793, framed in terms of singular wisdom and ability, and forming a striking contrast to the pride, petulance, and folly displayed in the communications of the English minister. They begin with repeating "the assurances of their sincere desire  
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to maintain peace and harmony between France and England. It is with great reluctance, say they, that the republic would see itself forced to a rupture much more contrary to its inclination than its interest."

In reference to lord Grenville's refusal to acknowledge M. Chauvelin in his diplomatic capacity, the council remark, "that in the negotiations now carrying on at Madrid, the principal minister of his catholic majesty did not hesitate to address M. Bourgoign, the ambassador of the republic at that court, by the title of minister plenipotentiary of France. But that a defect in point of form might not impede a negotiation, on the success of which depended the tranquillity of two great nations, they had sent credential letters to M. Chauvelin to enable him to treat according to the severity of diplomatic forms. The council repeat, that the decree of the 19th of November had been misunderstood; and that it was far from being intended to favor sedition—being merely applicable to the single case where the general will of a nation, clearly and unequivocally expressed, should call for the assistance and fraternity of the French nation. Sedition can never exist in an expression of the general will. The Dutch were certainly not seditious when they formed the generous resolution of throwing off the Spanish yoke—nor was it accounted as a crime to Henry IV. or to queen Elizabeth, that they listened to their solicitations of assistance. As to the right of navigation on the Scheldt, the council affirm, that it is a question of absolute indifference to England, little interesting even to Holland, but of great importance to the Belgians, who were not parties to the treaty of Westphalia, by which they were divested of that right; but when that nation shall find itself in full possession of its liberty, and from *any motive whatever* shall consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheldt, *France will not oppose it.* With respect to the charge of aggrandizement, France, they say, has renounced and still renounces

renounces all conquest; and its occupying the Netherlands will CONTINUE NO LONGER THAN THE WAR.—If these explanations appear insufficient, after having done every thing in our power to maintain peace, we will prepare for war. We shall combat with regret the English, whom we esteem, but we shall combat them without fear.”

The reply of lord Grenville to this memorial was couched in terms still more extraordinary and irritating than the first. His lordship declares, “that he finds nothing satisfactory in the result of it. Instead of reparation and retraction, his lordship complains, that nothing more is offered than an *illusory negotiation*”—as if England had a right to expect that France should give up every point in dispute previous to any negotiation; or as if the offer of evacuating the Netherlands at the termination of the war, and of leaving the Belgians 'to settle the question' relative to the Scheldt, together with the positive disavowal of the offensive meaning ascribed to the decree of November 19, did not form a proper and sufficient basis of negotiation. In fact, by these great concessions, every rational object of negotiation was accomplished before the negotiation itself had formally commenced. “Under this form of *extra-official* communication, nevertheless, lord Grenville goes on to say, that these explanations are not considered sufficient, and that ALL the MOTIVES which gave rise to the preparations STILL CONTINUE. If however, under the same *extra-official* form, you have any farther explanations, says his lordship, to give, I shall willingly attend to them.” In a separate note his lordship informs M. Chauvelin, that his majesty will not receive his new letters of credence from the French republic. M. Chauvelin then requested a personal interview with his lordship, which was also refused.

At length this extraordinary business was brought to a crisis, by a letter from lord Grenville, dated January, 24,

1793, in which his lordship says, "I am charged to notify to you, sir, that the character with which you had been invested at this court, and the functions of which have been so long suspended, being now entirely terminated by the fatal death of his most christian majesty, you have no longer any public character here; and his majesty has thought fit to order that you should retire from this kingdom within the term of eight days."—At this very time M. Maret, a confidential agent of M. Le Brun, was on his way to England with fresh dispatches from the executive council, and as there is good ground to believe, fresh concessions of the highest importance. But on his arrival in London, being informed of the compulsive dismissal of M. Chauvelin, he did not think himself authorized to open his commission. He therefore merely announced his arrival to lord Grenville, but no advances were made to him on the part of the English court.

The death of the French monarch was indeed a disastrous and mournful event. It is well known that the executive council, and a great majority of the conventional assembly, were eagerly desirous to have averted this fatal catastrophe; but the violence of the Jacobin faction, and the savage rage of the populace, rendered it impossible. "We may," said M. Le Brun to a confidential friend, "sacrifice ourselves, without being able to save the life of the king." It was not that the moderate party entertained any doubt of the veracity of the leading charges brought against the king; for, on this point, there was never any difference of opinion in France; but they discerned innumerable circumstances of palliation, which formed an irresistible claim to compassion and mercy. In England no one attempted to justify the deed; "nor," says an animated writer of that time, "is it the season for *extenuation*, now that the stream of prejudice flows strong, and the phantasm of a murdered king stalks before our affrightened imagination."

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As, by an express provision of the treaty of 1786, the dismissal of an ambassador was in future to be regarded as a virtual declaration of war, it is almost superfluous to mention the inferior causes of offence given to France immediately prior to that event, 1. by the **ALIEN BILL**, empowering the king, in direct contravention of the treaty of 1786, which stipulates the peaceful and undisturbed residence of the subjects of each power in the dominions of the other, to order, at his discretion, all foreigners to depart the kingdom: 2. by the bill prohibiting the circulation of assignats, or other paper securities issued under the authority of the French government; a measure rather of insult than of injury: 3. by a bill of a more serious nature, restraining the exportation of naval stores, arms and ammunition, including by a specific mention the article of salt-petre, of which it was well known that the French were in great need.

Immediately on the departure of M. Chauvelin, a memorial was presented by lord Auckland, ambassador at the Hague, to the states general; in which his lordship affirms to their high mightinesses, in language which sets all ideas of decorum at defiance, that "not four years ago, some **WRETCHES**, assuming the title of philosophers, had the presumption to think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society. In order to realize that dream of their vanity, they found it necessary to overthrow and destroy all received notions of subordination, manners, and religion, which have hitherto formed all the security, happiness, and consolation of the human race. Their destructive projects have but too well succeeded. But the effects of the new system which they endeavoured to introduce, served only to shew the imbecility and villany of its authors. The events which so rapidly followed each other since that epoch, surpass in atrocity all which had ever polluted the pages of history. Property, liberty, security, even life itself, have been deemed playthings

playthings in the hands of infamous men, who are the slaves of the most licentious passions of rapine, enmity, and ambition."

SUCH were the terms in which the wisdom of the English court thought it becoming to speak of the existing government of France! If any thing could add to the astonishment excited by this conduct, it would be, that a commission was at the same time sent over to the same ambassador to set on foot a negotiation with M. Dumourier, commander of the armies of the government thus publicly vilified, in order to effect an accommodation of differences.

Whether this overture was really serious, or whether, according to the declared opinion of M. Dumourier, himself, it was merely amusive and insidious, such a *prelude* must be equally the subject of admiration. In either case, it came too late to answer the purpose. The convention had taken their ultimate resolution; and on the 1st of February 1793 a decree unanimously passed that assembly, declaring the REPUBLIC OF FRANCE at WAR with the KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, and the STADTHOLDER of HOLLAND.

